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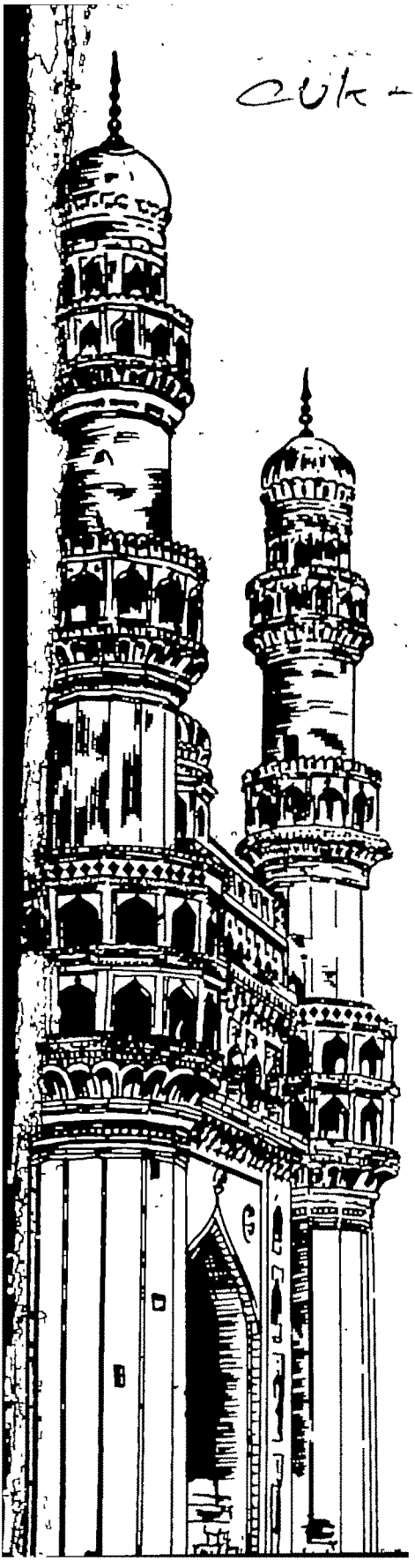

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

MUHIB O. OPELOYE	–	Associate Professor of Islamic Studies, Dept. of Religion & Philosophy, Lagos State University, Nigeria.
JUSTICE MOHAMAD SA'ID MOHAMAD AL-ASHMAWY	–	Egypt.
ABDUR-RAHMAN O. A. OLAYIWOLA	–	Dept. of Political Science, Logos State University, Nigeria.
YASIR SULEIMAN	–	Department of Arabic Studies, The University of St. Andrews, Scotland.
ABDUL HAQ	–	School of Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

OUR REVIEWERS

S.VAHIDUDDIN	–	Honorary Editor, *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad.
MUSA ALI AJETUNMOBI	–	Dept. of Religions, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

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To Our Readers

For various reasons the publication of ISLAMIC CULTURE over the last few years has fallen behind its regular schedule. The Governing Board of ISLAMIC CULTURE is confident that the problems have now been solved, and that the Journal can, *Insha'-Allah*, come out on time. It has, therefore, decided to bridge the gap by bringing the Journal up to date with the issue of January 1994. The Journal will henceforward follow its regular schedule of publication.

Subscribers' interests are being fully protected. All subscription payments, made for any term subsequent to the publication of October 1991 issue, are being credited to the year 1994 and onwards.

For those numbers of ISLAMIC CULTURE that have remained unpublished we have a special publication in view which will be offered to our readers in due course. It will be separately priced, corresponding roughly to the price of the unpublished issues, and will be of special interest to researchers, scholars and general readers.

We request scholars to contribute their articles to the Journal, helping us in our efforts to keep up its high standards and to re-establish its smooth publication. We look forward to a bright future for the Journal that has been an important name in its field for over six decades now.

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THE THEOLOGY OF GOD'S WORD FROM THE BIBLICAL AND QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVES

MUHIB OMOLAYO OPELOYE

Introduction

THE word of God known in the Old Testament as *La debar Yahweh* and in the New Testament as *Ho Legos tou Theou*, and variously referred to in the Qur'ān as *Kalām-Allāh*, *Kalimat-Allāh* (pl. *Kalimāt)* and *al-kalimu* is an expression of divine will. According to the Scriptures the word of God is not only supreme and immutable, it is eternal. The divine word has several theological significations three of which shall be explored in this paper because of their contribution to the Christian-Muslim understanding of the revealed word of God. These are the word of God as a message, the word as an operative force and the word as a personified force.

The Bible and Qur'ān as Words of God

The Bible is the English coinage of Latin and Greek *Biblia* (plural of *Biblion*: book). The name 'the books' without qualification indicates the special position which these books occupied and also shows that the Bible is a collection of books or a library rather than a single literary composition.[1] The word Qur'ān on the other hand is an infinite noun from the Arabic triliteral verb *qara'a* meaning 'to read.' The Qur'ān is so called to signify the frequency with which the book is read. The Bible and Qur'ān as sacred books respectively constitute the foundation for the Christian and Muslim beliefs. All over the world devout Christians revere the Bible in the same way devout Muslims revere the Qur'ān because the two scriptures are perceived as material transcriptions of divine revelation.

The sacredness of the Bible derives from the fact that it was written under divine inspiration. It is not easy to determine with precision the number of the inspired writers because some books of the scripture

were written by more than one author while some writers wrote more than one book. Huffman suggests that forty inspired writers wrote the different books of the Bible.[2] Sometimes, the author of a book dictated to a professional scribe as Jeremiah and Paul did.[3] Some of the Biblical books are ascribed to well known Biblical personages while controversy surrounds the authorship of some.

As regards the duration of revelation, it is believed that the Old Testament books were written during a period of one thousand years beginning about 1100 B.C. while the 27 New Testament books were written in less than one hundred years between 50 - 150 C.E.[4] It is evident that in both cases the revealed words were not committed to writing very early, a factor which accounted for reliance on oral tradition for a long time.

The Biblical books are not only sacred, they are canonical. The canon of the Bible refers to the collection of books which passed the test of authenticity and authority and were consequently compiled together as Bible. Such books are measured by the standard of divine inspiration and were adjudged to be God-breathed.[5] Two factors necessitated the process of canonization: the emergence of dubious religious writings and the infiltration into the Church of heresies such as gnosticism and marcionism. It was an attempt to get rid of the spurious books and the heretical teachings that a test of canoncity had to be passed before a book could be adjudged to be God-breathed.[6]

The books of the Bible are those that survived the tests of canonicity and therefore form the canon of the scriptures. Several other religious books were written which fell below the standard of divine inspiration and were therefore not canonized. The process of canonization was gradual. Each Biblical book became canonical as from the time the Church accorded it recognition. According to Wiley and Culbertson, the books of Law were recognised as part of the canon by 440 B.C., the books of the Prophets by 200 B.C. and the writing by 100 B.C.[7] Similarly the formation of the New Testament Canon was gradual. There was no agreement among the Church fathers as to which books formed the New Testament Canon until about 400 C.E.[8]

Credibility and authenticity of the canonized scriptures have been attributed to the following:

i) the claim in I Tm. 3:16 that all scripture is God-breathed;
ii) proof from Jesus's reception of the Old Testament as evident in Mt. 5:17 - 18, Jn.10:34 and Lk. 24:27;
iii) the influence of the holy spirit on the inspired writers as claimed in Mk.12:36; Act. 1:16, Act.4:24-25;
iv) validity of many historical facts recorded in the scripture;
v) fulfilment of many prophetic predictions;
vi) confirmation of many Old Testament and New Testament accounts by ancient manuscripts discovered in the recent past.

The question may be asked, if the Biblical inspiration is divinely based why is there a preponderance of textual errors and discrepancies in the scripture which come to light when we compare the following passages:

i) 2 Chr. 36:9 and 2 Kg.24:8;
ii) 2 Sm. 10:18 and 1 Chr. 19:18;
iii) 2 Chr. 9:25 and 2 Kg. 4:26;
iv) 1 Kg. 7:26 and 2 Chr. 4:5;
v) Gen. 1:1 - 2 and Gen. 2:4 - 8.

The causes of the errors are not left unexplained. Metzger [9] identifies the following factors as responsible for the errors in the Bible:

i) Speed of production of the scripture which outran accuracy of execution because of rapid increase in the number of Christian converts during the first century;
ii) Faulty translation as a result of imperfect knowledge of the original languages of the scripture;
iii) Cumbersome method of transcription coupled with extensive dictation of the text by the lector.

Besides the foregoing, changes were sometimes deliberately made in good faith. According to Metzger these include changes involving harmonistic corruption, addition of natural complements, and adjuncts, clearing up historical and geographical difficulties, conflation of readings, changes due to doctrinal consideration and addition of miscellaneous

details. It must be admitted that it is on account of the errors arising from these latter reasons that the Qur'ān perceives the Bible as an interpolated scripture and it strongly rebukes those who are responsible for this. [10] The problem of textual errors in the Bible gave rise to the two forms of criticism generated among the Biblical scholars viz: the 'lower criticism' (which concerns with the preliminary task of getting back to the writings as composed by the original authors) and the 'higher criticism' (which deals with the questions arising out of their contents and their trustworthiness).[11]

The sacredness of the Qur'ān on the other hand derives from the fact that it was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad by God through the archangel Jibrīl (Gabriel), a fact attested to by the Qur'ān itself in *Sūrah* II:97, and *Sūrah* XXVI:192 - 195. The revelation came to the Prophet Muḥammad piecemeal for a period of 23 years before it was completed (610 - 632 C.E.).[12]

Each time a revelation was brought he not only committed it to memory together with his Companions, he instructed his scribe Zayd b. Thābit or others to write it down dictating the sequence of the chapters and verses. The literate ones among his Companions also kept written records of the revelation. Though the Qur'ān was not compiled as a bound book during the life of the Prophet Muḥammad, the arrangement of its chapters and verses effected by the Prophet made possible the various uses to which it was put in his time. The loss of life of many Qur'ānic memorizers (*Ḥuffāẓ*) in the Yamāmah war during the reign of Caliph Abū Bakr led to the compilation of the Qur'ān, while variation in the mode of reading led to the standardisation of its text during the reign of Caliph 'Uthmān.

The claim of divine authorship of the Qur'ān rests on certain assertions enshrined in its different passages, viz:

i) Do they not consider the Qur'ān, had it been from other than God, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy? (*Sūrah* IV:82).
ii) This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than God.... (*Sūrah* X:37).[13]

iii) We have without doubt sent down the message and we will assuredly guard it from corruption (*Sūrah* XV:9).[14]
iv) Verily this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds (*Sūrah* XXVI:192).
v) It is for us to collect it and to promulgate it (*Sūrah* LXXV:17).

These assertions debunk the orientalists' claim that the Prophet Muḥammad was the author of the Qur'ān. Such a claim is certainly contrary to the evidence in the Scripture. Apart from the passages exonerating the Prophet from the charge of forging the Scripture he was warned against making any verdict in anticipation of revelation,[15] just as he was urged to resist temptation to invent his own scripture.[16]

The Qur'ān being a direct communication from God to the Prophet, instances are preponderant when God talks in the first person in the Scripture,[17] apart from instances when divine words are put in the mouth of the Prophet with the use of prefixing imperative verb *Qul*.[18] The proof of the divine source of the Qur'ānic revelation is strengthened by the fulfilment of many divine promises recorded in the Qur'ān as will be discussed later.

The Word As a Message

The divine message enshrined in the Bible can be understood in the context of the Biblical central themes. The themes are creation, sin, fall, redemption and salvation. In the beginning God created man and he was in the state of well-being until he was tempted to sin and consequently fell. God started a plan of redemption with Abraham and made promises contained in Genesis 12. Thus Israel was to be a prototype to reach out to the entire world. Under the leadership of Moses, God made a covenant with the Israelites. They settled in Canaan and established a monarchy. Corruption reigned supreme. Consequently, prophets appeared on the scene. The kingdoms later fell, the north was captured by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. and the south (Judea) was subjugated by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. This incident was followed by the exile of the Israelites. The first of the exiles returned to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. The return saw the beginning of the intertestamental period when the Messianic expectation

was rife.

The New Testament era was ushered in by John the Baptist. With the advent of Jesus (the expected Messiah) the Gospel was declared and after him the apostles propagated it with emphasis on the second coming of Jesus, while the eschatological events were being anticipated as enunciated in the book of Revelation. Thus God's singular programme developed progressively from Genesis to Revelation.

The programme of salvation requires faith in God, His worship and good work. This is reflected not only in the Old Testament but also in the New Testament. For instance, the injunction to believe in God is contained in Ex.20:3 and Mk. 12:29; the injuction to worship God is enshrined in Ex.20:4 while the injuction to engage in good work is found in the rest of the ten commandments as well as in the Sermon on the Mount.

From the rhetorical question of Prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament it can be easily discerned that faith in God has to be complemented with good work as a condition for salvation. The question is asked:

> Will you steal, murder,
> commit adultery, swear
> falsely, burn incense to Baal
> and go after other gods -
> that you heve not known and
> then come and stand before me in this
> house which is called by my name
> and say: 'we are delivered'
> only to go out doing all these
> abominations?[19]

What can be understood from the message here is that faith in God is of no meaning if it is unaccompanied by good work. It is in the same vein that other prophets decry external ritual observance that is not backed up with good work. Prophet Isaiah for instance declares:

> What to me is the multitude of
> your sacrifice?... I have had
> enough of burnt offering of rams
> and the fat of the fed beasts...
> when you spread your hands I will
> hide my eyes from you. Even
> though you make many prayers,
> I will not listen, your hands
> are full of blood.... What the
> Lord wanted is not rituals and
> prayers but simply that each
> man should cease to do evil
> and learn to do good.[20]

Similarly for Prophet Hosea, true faith is a matter of the heart and not of external ritual, hence he remarks: I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offering.[21] It would be pointed out that in the foregoing passages it is not the rituals in themselves that are to be condemned but the hypocrisy behind them.

The picture would not be different in the New Testament if the messages of Paul and James are understood to be complementary in this regard. While the former's emphasis is faith, the latter's is on good work. As far as Paul is concerned faith is the means of salvation, man is justified by faith apart from works of law.[22] According to James, faith without work cannot save man, faith by itself if it has no work is dead; it is through work that man's faith can be confirmed. [23] It is important to note that in spite of Paul's posture described above he still recognises the importance of work of law as evidenced by his testimony that the law should not be overthrown by faith.[24] This is why we believe that the stand of the two apostles are not necessarily contradictory.

The central figure of the New Testament message is Jesus Christ whose advent is believed to have been predicted in Isaiah 7:10 - 17 and through whom the Christians hope to secure salvation.[25] The Jews to whom Jesus was sent forfeited their chance of salvation for their lack of

belief in his messiahship. The faithlessness of the Jews is acknowledged not only in the New Testament but also in the Old Testament as evident in Mt. 10:6, Rm.11:7 - 10 and Jer. 3:6. The Gentiles who were more receptive of the message became the focus of attention even though initially the Gospel was not meant for them.[26]

The Qur'ān as the word of God is a message to the entire humankind sent through the Prophet Muhammad.[27] It consists of 114 *Sūrahs* incorporating different subjects including law, history, theology, liturgy, sociology, sufism, science etc. The Qur'ānic message which according to *Sūrah* XLI:43 bears resemblance with messages brought by the earlier prophets is essentially to guide man to that which is right [28] and to bring him out of darkness to light. [29] Hence the Scripture is referred to as a guide (*hudā*) and mercy (*raḥmah*).

Apart from its function of guidance (*hidāyah*), the message is to explain to man his duties to God and his duties to his fellow man which is why the Scripture is known as *al-Bayyinah*.[30] The message is elsewhere referred to as *Sharī'ah*.[31]

The kernel of the divine message enshrined in the Qur'ān is the call to belief (*al-Īmān*) and to engage in righteous work (*al-'amal al-ṣālih*). These being the two basic requirements for salvation in Islam a Muslim is required to believe in God, His angels, His prophets, His revealed books, and the Last Day.[32] Moreover he is called to engage in the works of righteousness. This is many-faceted as it requires man to observe the prescribed acts of devotion, to keep within the limits of the law, the limits of divine commands and prohibitions to be able to maintain good relation with God. Equally important is the need to maintain good relation with a fellow man. While the former comes under worship (*'ibādah*) the latter comes under transaction (*mu'āmalah*).

The elements constituting the works of righteousness are spelt out in the different passages of the Qur'ān with different emphasis:

i) Emphasis on belief (*Sūrah* IV:136).
ii) Emphasis on worship (*Sūrah* XXIII:1 - 11).

iii) Emphasis on prohibition (*Sūrah* VI: 151).
iv) Emphasis on relation with others (*Sūrah* XVII:22 - 29).
v) Combination of all (*Sūrah* II:177).

The Qur'ānic message is for the believers and non-believers alike. This is why sometimes mankind in general are addressed as in *Sūrah* II: 21[33]; sometimes the unbelievers are the target as in *Sūrah* 'al-Kāfirūn.' In other passages the People of the Book (*Ahl al- Kitāb*) are in view,[34] while in many instances the believers are the focus.[35] According to *Sūrah* LXXIII:19 the message helps only those who choose to take it as a straight path to their Lord.[36] In other words man is not compelled to accept it. Neither is the bearer of the message to resort to imposition in compliance with the principle of religious freedom enshrined in *Sūrah* II:256. His was to deliver the message and give the promise of eternal bliss to the righteous and the promise of perdition to the unrighteous, thus performing his role as a bearer of glad tiding (*bashīran*) and a warner (*nadhīran*).[37]

The Word As an Operative Force

The word is not only a message, it is also an operative force. The Biblical revelation views the word as an operative force behind the accomplishment of the divine will. This assertion is explicitly stated in Isaiah 55:10 - 11 which reads:

> As the rain and snow came down
> from heaven and return not
> thither but water the earth
> making it bring forth and
> sprout giving seed to the
> sower and bread to the eater,
> so shall my word be that goes
> forth from my mouth,it shall
> not return to me empty but it
> shall accomplish that which I
> purpose and prosper in the thing
> for which I sent it.

The perception of the word for this purpose is first noticed in the work of creation as contained in Genesis where it is evident that everything God created came into being through divine fiat. The formula is 'let there be' and 'it is.' It is through this formula that the light, the firmament, the land and vegetation, the moon and stars, the bird and fish, the animals and the man are all created.[38]

Psalm 33:6 - 9 in corroboration of this assertion says: 'By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made and all their host by the breath of His mount... for He spoke and it came to be, He commanded and it stood forth.' Moreover, the efficacy of the divine word in this regard is brought to light in Psalm 147:15 - 18 as it reads:

> God send forth His command to
> the earth, His word runs swiftly.
> He gives snow like wool,
> He scatters hoarfrost like ashes;
> He casts forth His ace like marsels;
> Who can stand before His cold.
> He sends forth His word and melts
> them, He makes His wind blow and
> the waters flow.

As regards divine healing and the operative force of the word, Psalm 107:17 - 20 has this to say:

> Some were sick through their
> sinful ways and because of their
> iniquities suffered affliction;
> they loathed any kind of food and
> they drew near to the gates of
> death; then they cried to the
> Lord in their trouble and He
> delivered them from their distress;
> He sent forth His word and healed
> them and delivered them from
> destruction.

Even though the 'sick' in the passage is figurative according to J.W. Rogarson *et al.*, the power of the word is not undermined. It is a word of encouragement and 'word of hope.'[39]

Also in the Biblical revelation, the operative force of the word accounts for fulfilment of God's future plans. These are future events which came to pass as predicted by the prophets being spokesmen of God. Isaiah alone made several of such predictions. He predicted that Jerusalem would be a city to be visited by people of different nations to gain inspiration[40]; he predicted deliverance of Jerusalem from the attack of the Assyrians[41]; he foretold the fall of Babylon saying that wild beasts would lie down there and its houses would be filled with howling creatures[42]; he predicted the destruction of Jerusalem but according to him only the erring people would be affected as the righteous would survive and would return to Zion.[43]

Also in the Qur'ān the word is an operative force behind the accomplishment of the divine will. This assertion is emphatically stated in not less than eight passages of the Qur'ān, viz:

i) They say: 'Allāh has begotten a son,' glory be to Him, Nay to him belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth everything renders worship to Him, and to Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth when He decrees a matter He says to it: 'Be' and *it is*, (*Sūrah* II:116 - 117).
ii) She said 'O my Lord how shall I have a son when noman has touched me? He said: 'Even so: Allāh creates what He wills when he decrees a plan He says: 'Be'and *it is*.(*Sūrah* III:47).
iii) The similitude of Jesus before Allah is that of Adam. He created him from dust then said to him: 'Be' and *it is*. (*Sūrah* III:59).
iv) It is He who created the heavens and the earth in true (propor tion). The day He says: 'Be,' behold, *it is*. His word is the truth.... (*Sūrah* VI:73).
v) They swear their strongest oath by Allah that Allah will not raise up the dead. Nay but it is a promise (binding) on Him in truth.... For to anything which We have willed, We but say the word: 'Be' and *it is (Sūrah* XVI: 38 - 40).

vi) It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allāh that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him when He determines a matter, He only says to it 'Be,' and *it is*.(*Surah* XIX:35).

vii) Is not He who created the heavens and earth able to create the like thereof? Yes indeed, for He is the Creator Supreme of skill and knowledge (infinite). Verily when He intends a thing, His command is 'Be'and *it is*.(*Surah* XXXVI:81 - 82).

viii)It is He who gives life and death and when He decides an affair He says to it, 'Be' and *it is*. (*Surah* XL:68).

In the foregoing passages, the creative power of God is demonstrated by the power of the word. The verses are meant to show that work of creation is the prerogative of God in consequence of which He is known in the Scripture as *al-Khāliq*. The instrument of creation used in the eight verses is the imperative verb *kun* (be). According to al-Qurṭubī[44] *kāf* signifies *kaynūnah* (i.e. the being) while *nūn* signifies *nūr* (i.e. light or power of God to effect creation). The mention of Jesus in some of the passages is with a view to presenting him as a special creation of God in contradistinction with the Christian notion of his being God's incarnate. We shall in the next section focus on Jesus as the word of God or word from God which the Bible and the Qur'ān regard him to be.

Aside from creation, other divine actions are associated with the operative force of the word. The Qur'ān (*Sūrah* XXXVIII:42) offers an example of the work of healing through the power of the word. Ayyūb (the Biblical Job) was a prophet afflicted by a disease which got healed after receiving the divine word that instructed him to stamp his foot on the ground resulting in the gushing out of water by God's command, drinking from which and washing with which served as the remedy of his disease.[45]

The work of healing is sometimes performed by man as exemplified by Jesus. Man is only able to perform this function in consequence of divine grace. While the Christians may attribute Jesus's ability in this regard to the divine nature ascribed to him, the Muslim would see it as a divine gift bestowed on him as a prophet of God to facilitate his mission.[46]

The operative force of the word equally accounts for the

realisation and fulfilment of God's future plans. Several examples of this abound in the Qur'ān. In *Sūrat* 'al-Fath,' the Prophet Muhammad was assured of triumphant entry into Makkah after eight years of exile in the city of Madinah. This was realised in the year 630 C.E. when he subjugated the holy city without any resistance. In *Sūrat* 'al-Hajj' Prophet Ibrāhīm was made to proclaim the pilgrimage among men and he was assured of the believers' enthusiastic desire to perform *Hajj*. It goes without saying that up till the present day pilgrims from all over the world continue to go to the holy lands of Makkah and Madinah to perform *Hajj* rites.

At the opening of *Sūrah* 'Rum' reference is made to the defeat of the Roman empire under Heraclius by the Persians at which the pagan Quraysh of Makkah were joyous because of their pro-Persian leanings. They were in the same passage informed that the Persian victory would not last as the tide would soon turn against them. True to the Qur'ānic prediction, the Romans defeated the Persians at the battle of Issue in 622 C.E under the same Heraclius.[47]

The Word As a Personified Force

So far we have examined the word as a verbalised concept. In this section we shall focus on the personification of the word. In the contexts of the two Scriptures the word is personified in Jesus Christ (the Qur'ānic 'Īsā). According to the forth gospel at the very beginning of creation the word already was; the word dwelt with God; and the word was God and through Him all things came to be... and the word became flesh and dwelt among men.[48]

This New Testament passage is meant to prove the pre-existence, the personality as well as the divinity of Jesus.[49] The passage in verse 14 demonstrates that God became man and temporarily lived on earth when the word became flesh, thus God is believed to have revealed Himself in Jesus. This Biblical conception of the word serves as the basis for the Christian doctrine of Trinity. This is the belief that in God there are three persons who subsist in one nature.[50] The three persons are designated as Father (the God), Son (Jesus Christ) and Spirit (the Holy

Ghost). To the Christian, the import of the Trinity doctrine is inherent in the divine scheme of salvation of all men. According to the Christian theology all men became sinners as a result of Adam's sin and they can only be liberated from the inherited deprivity by the blood of Jesus who was made to die on the cross because of the sin of men.[51]

According to Christianity, God's purpose for sending His beloved Son to the world is to atone the sin of man with his blood. This God has done as a demonstration of His love for humanity. Thus the saving will of God is seen to have been executed in Jesus Christ and communicated to men through him and God's grace is seen to have appeared in his incarnation. Therefore salvation in the Biblical conception is a work of God's mercy,[52] and a work of His grace[53] shown through Jesus, the God who became man for the purpose of man's salvation. Evidences abound in the Bible affirming that salvation comes through Jesus Christ.[54]

The Qur'ān on the other hand regards Jesus as word from God (*kalimatun minhu)*[55] because he was born without the usual agency of a father as God brought him to being simply by sending a command that Maryam (the Biblical Mary) should become pregnant in consequence of which conception took place. The command is : 'Be' and 'it is.'[56] As far as the Qur'ān is concerned Jesus was neither God nor the son of God but a prophet sent to the children of Israel as evident in *Sūrah* III:49 - 51. If the Bible ascribes divine nature to Jesus in consequence of his miraculous birth, the Qur'ān does not consider the miraculous birth sufficient to justify his deification because Adam was brought into existence in a more miraculous way being a creature with neither a father nor mother.[57]

The Qur'ānic passages are preponderant refuting the Christian doctrine of Trinity, Jesus' divinity and his being the son of God.[58] The Qur'ān sees absurdity in the existence of more than one God arguing that if there were to be many gods, each god would have taken away what he had created while some would have lorded it over others.[59] In another passage it is asserted that if there were in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allāh there would have been confusion in both.[60] Just as the doctrine of Trinity has no basis in Islam, so is the doctrine of vacarious

sacrifice extraneous to Islamic teachings. Islam believes that salvation can be secured without God shedding the blood of Jesus for the remission of the sins of humankind. What is required of man is faith and good deeds.

Conclusion: The Unresolved Problem

In spite of all the similarities in the Christian-Muslim understanding of the word of God, a problem remains unresolved. The problem is not the discrepancies in any particular Scripture for these can be explained. Neither is it the different perception of Jesus's status for Jesus remains what he is regardless of whatever conception of him we may have. The problem lies in the seeming unreconcilability in the Biblical and Qur'ānic accounts in certain respects examples of which include:

i) The Biblical view that Adam's sin was inherited by the human kind and the Qur'ānic belief that the sin was forgiven.
ii) The Biblical assertion that Abraham was to sacrifice his son Isaac and the Qur'ānic view that it was Ishmael.
iii) The Biblical attribution of the worship of the molten calf to Aaron and the Qur'ānic attribution of the action to one Samiri.
iv) The Biblical teaching in the New Testament that God is one in Trinity and the Qur'ānic teaching that He is absolutely One.

This is a problem because of the two Scriptures' claim to have emanated from one and the same God and the belief that God's word is eternal, immutable, unchangeable and consistent. This is the basis for the Qur'ānic call for dialogue between the Muslims and the People of the Book when it declares:

> Say: O People of the Book, come to common terms
> as between us and you; that we worship none but
> Allāh that we associate no partners with Him;
> that we erect not from among ourselves lords
> and patrons other than Allāh; if they turn back
> say ye: Bear witness that we (at least)
> are Muslims (bowing to Allāh's will).

It is through dialogue that the theological differences can be

discussed and where they cannot be resolved it should afford the parties in dialogue the opportunity to understand one another's point of view. However, this will only be possible if we are prepared to widen the margin of our religious tolerance and understanding.

NOTES

(1) J.L. Mckenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (Geoffery Chapman, London, 1978), pp. 95-96.

(2) J.A. Huffman, *God's Wonder Book* (The Standard Press, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1945), p. 53

(3) See Jn. 36:4; I Cor. 16:21 abd G1.6:11.

(4) Huffman, *op. cit.*, p. 54

(5) M.F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Moody Press, Chicago, 1957), p. 174.

(6) E.C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Moody Press, Chicago, 1976), p. 43.

(7) H.O. Wiley and R.T. Culbertson, *Introduction to Christian Theology* (Beacon Hill Press, Kansas, 1946), p. 59.

(8) Huffman, *op. cit.*, pp. 61 - 62.

(9) B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968), pp. 14 ff. and pp. 195ff.

(10) *Sũrah* II:79.

(11) Stanley Cook, *Introduction to the Bible* (Penguin Books, 1958), p.35.

(12) This mode of revelation is known as recited revelation to which reference is made in *Sũrah* XLII:51. It is one of the three modes of revelation in the passage.

(13) Cf *Sũrahs* II:23; XI:13; XI:35; XVII:88; XXXII:3.

(14) Cf. *Sũrahs* XVI:89; LXXVI:23.

(15) *Sũrahs* XX:114; XXV:16.

(16) *Sũrah* X.15.

(17) Examples are found in *Sūrahs* XV:9; XXI:25; LXV:17.

(18) Instances like this are preponderant in the Qur'ān. The following are only a few passages: *Sūrahs* II:80; II:91; II:97; II:135.

(19) Jer. 7:9 -10.

(20) Is. 1:11 - 17.

(21) Hos.6:6.

(22) Rm. 3:21 - 31.

(23) Jm. 2:14 - 26.

(24) Rm. 3:31.

(25) Lk. 2:11; I Tm. 4:10.

(26) Rm 11:11 - 24; Cf. Rm. 3.2; Mt.10:5.

(27) *Sūrah* XXI:107; cf. *Sūrah* XXXIV:28.

(28) *Sūrah* XVIII:9.

(29) *Sūrah* LXV:11.

(30) *Sūrah* XVI:89.

(31) *Sūrah* VL:18.

(32) *Sūrah* V:136.

(33) Cf. *Sūrah* II:168; IV:1; IV:174; VII:158; X:23; X:108; XXII:1.

(34) See *Sūrahs* III:64; III:99; IV:171; V:15; V:19 etc.

(35) See *Sūrahs* II:104; II:153; II:254; III 118; IV:29; V:1 etc.

(36) *Sūrah* LXXVI:29.

(37) *Sūrah* II:119.

(38) Gen.1:3 - 31.

(39) J.W. Rogarson *et al.*, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary: The Psalm 101-150* (Cambridge University Press, London, 1977), p.52.

(40) Is. 2:2 - 3.

(41) II Kg. 19:32 - 34.

(42) Is. 13:19 - 22.

(43) Is. 10:4 - 23: The fall of Jerusalem was also predicted by Jeremiah, Amos, Micah.

(44) Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol 2 (Maktab Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, 1949), pp. 86- 91.

(45) S.A. Maududi, *The Meaning of the Qur'an*, vol. 5 (Board of Islamic Publications, Delhi, n.d.), p. 395; cf. *Tafsīr al-Murāghī*, vol 8, part 23 (Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1974), p.124.

(46) The Christian view does not explain how man with no divine nature is able to perform miracles.

(47) The Muslims preferred victory of the Romans because they were 'People of the Book.' See A.Y. Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (The Islamic Foundation, London, 1975), p. 1008; cf. Sayyid Quṭb, *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān*, vol.6 (Beirut, 1971), p. 434 ff.

(48) Jn. 1:1 -14.

(49) A.M. Hunter, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to John* (Cambridge University Press, 1965), p 18.

(50) Mckenzie, *op cit*, p. 899.

(51) Rm.3:21 - 24.

(52) Tt.3 5.

(53) Eph.2:5; Tt.2:11.

(54) Lk.2:11; Jn. 10:9; Act 13:23; Rm.15:11

(55) *Sūrahs* III.45; IV.171.

(56) *Sūrahs* III.45 - 47, XIX:16 - 22, cf Abu'l-Qāsim al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, vol.1 (Matabaʻat Mustafā, Cairo, 1972), p 584.

(57) *Sũrah* III:59.

(58) On Trinity see *Sũrahs* V:75, on divinity of Jesus see *Sũrahs* V:19; V:75; V:119-120, on sonship see *Sũrahs* IX:30, II:116; X.68; XVII:111; XVIII:4; XIX:88 etc.

(59) *Sũrah* XXIII:91.

(60) *Sũrah* XXI.22.

RELIGION AND POLITICS

MOHAMAD SA'ID MOHAMAD AL-ASHMAWY

AN analysis of the relationship between religion and politics requires at the outset a definition of 'religion' and 'politics.' From there it is necessary to pursue their common denominator, working through time from the distant past until today, then to examine how some people saw the positive elements of the relationship between religion and politics and how they forswore the negative elements between them. Finally we should illustrate the relationship between religion and politics in our time and in the future.

One definition of religion has been 'the feeling of the spiritual attitude of recognising a supra-controlling power, with the manifestation of such feeling in the conduct of life.'

One definition of politics has been 'the connection or belief in a state of being organised under a particular form of government or any similar institute.' Comparing these two definitions one can see that there is much common ground and correlation between religion and politics: each pertains to the conduct of man and both are underpinned by a certain reality, anchored in a particular power or organization.

At the same time the religion offers clergyman, be they de jure or de facto, the opportunity to control human conduct and man's activities. So too politics is the work of politicians who look to govern human conduct as a means to control man's activities.

The shared but conflicting interest between clergymen, be they de jure or de facto, and politicians or rulers was a frequent source of tension between the two, each seeking to promote its own stake at the expense of the other to hold sway over the people and society.

The correlation between religion and politics begins with the dawn of history in the Middle East, particularly Egypt, where the Pharaoh was considered a son or manifestation of God. As a divine being the

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Pharaoh's judgements were considered literally the judgements of God and his utterance regarded as if it was the word of God.

In time this understanding penetrated all human thought and sentiment in the Middle and Far East, where ancient civilisations emerged. Later, too, this perception spread to the West with the rise of the Hellenistic world as an active power in the Ancient World. Alexander the Great set himself up as the God-king, tantamout to Pharaoh, declaring himself the son of God. Julius Caesar in Rome was similarly affected by Egyptian *Weltanschauung*, pronouncing himself a God-Caesar, for which he was murdered by his friends who saw that such a declaration would turn Roman democracy into theocratic rule.

Whatever people's culture or education, most people will always be limited by the ideas and feelings rooted in their mind since childhood. For this reason any civilization will always bear the baggage of the old ideas and irrational beliefs, unless it makes an effective effort to properly evolve, be it mentally or cognitively, a structure of its own.

Throughout the course of history the relationship between religion and politics could be broken down into three models. The first model is when the founder of the religion, say the prophet or the teacher, rules alone formulating religious commandments and political rules. This is the case of Judaism and Islam.

The second model occurs when the founder of the religion abstains from politics. With the founder's death, his followers set about establishing an institution, or Church or the like, and on occasion this institution meshes with the political power, either to oppose or to serve it, as happened in Christianity.

The third model is when the founder of the religion, the prophet or teacher, abstains from political power, and his followers refrain from establishing any institution. A link between religion and the political power emerges, resulting in the exploitation of religion by politicians, as happened in the case of Buddhism.

In all states rulers try to use religion for their needs, veiling their aims in religious expressions or in the name of the public interest. When the religious institution sought to break loose or dissociate itself from the regimented rules of the political power, it was mostly the rulers who won in the end, protected as they were with the rich and the institutes. Today monetary institutes, namely, the Islamic Investment Banks or companies, have similarly tried to use religion to enhance their power and curb that of the opposition. Some clergymen resisted the temptation of accepting money and gold but others justify helping the rich on the grounds that to reach salvation in the house of God requires furnishing money for the benefit of the poor and the like.

The classical example of confrontation between rulers and religious institutes occurred with Christianity. Jesus Christ refused to be a ruler, judge or arbiter, but his followers established an institution and the Christian society evolved with two cities in every place: the city of God, named *civitas dei*, headed by the Church, and the Earthly City headed by the civil power, *civitas terrena*.

Under the feudal order each prince ruled his fiefdom in relative isolation to the other's so that the religious institutions had the upper hand over all the princes. Nevertheless, in time when the bourgeois class was established with the rise of the modern industrial revolution, fiefdoms gathered under one king who grew in power, supported as he was by bankers, industrialists and traders amongst others.

The scene was set for conflict between the civil and religious powers. The more stable became the kings, the more they looked to use religion to serve their purposes, provoking tension between the kings and the religious institution. With the religious institution looking to interfere in every human activity and control it by religious rules, the rulers sought to counter their authority by segregating religious institutions from the rest of society and governing society on the basis of a civil order.

It was at this time that the philosophers, intellectuals and writers created what has become known as secularism, namely, the separation between clergymen, be they de jure or de facto, and the political power.

Many decades passed before the position became clearer, and a civil society emerged divorced from the religious establishment The sphere of influence for religious institutions was limited to the domain of religious activities alone.

The classical example of the founder of a religious community being sovereign in both its religious and civil tenets is Islam. The Prophet Muhammad established a new system in which people no longer identified with each other on the basis of blood relations, but rather on the basis of religious faith. The Prophet Muhammad was both the commander in times of war and an arbiter of disputes put before him by believers. After his death, a Caliph was appointed in the Prophet's place. Caliph literally means both 'the one who comes after another in time' and 'the successor' and initially the word was used to refer to the successor of the Prophet in this former chronologicl sense of the word. But in the course of time the word was distorted, used by the later Caliphs to mean that they were the successors to the Prophet Muhammad in all his capacities, thereby making themselves infallible. They gathered in their hands both religious symbols and political rule.

Since in Islam there are neither religious institutions nor clergymen de jure, the scholars were divided. Most served the ruler, justifying all his acts to him, but some boycotted the power and removed themselves from politics. Almost all Islamic jurisprudence avoided tackling the rights and obligations of the Caliph and his relationship to the people. Jurisprudence skirted round the public domain, restricting itself to individual interactions and social relations.

With the modern revolution of information and data, the world has evovled not into an electronic village, but a TV screen. People are searching for a way to reconcile religion with politics without creating a conflict between them. In my opinion religion will play a major role in the future, especially in the coming century, shaping the ethics of the majority and connecting them to humanity and to the cosmos. Moreover as the information revolution flourishes, so the ruling power will grow more powerful in the future.

A peaceful reconciliation needs to be found for the two powers or religion and politics. To succeed, religion must recognize that it is a faith instilled in man's conscience of profound power, to connect the individual with his family, society, humanity and the cosmos at large.

Under no circumstances should rulers be allowed to exploit religion to justify their actions or to shield their decisions. This principle of separating politics from religion should not only apply to rulers, but also to any group leader, chief or preacher. Every action whatever its source —be it that of a president, minister, clergyman, scholar or layman— should be considered a civil, not a religious, action, even if based on religious commands. Since it is the product of a human hand, it may be fallible and subject to be either right or wrong.

The same applies for action on the authority of religious rules, interpretations or commands, for it itself is the product of human not divine beings. The action itself is human, even if the rule or command is divine. Were such a distinction between religion and politics understood, the ruling power or politicians would have no scope to exploit religion or religious sentiment to underpin its power and win followers with the name of God.

Otherwise man risks returning to the dawn of history when the Pharaoh was the God-king, and his subjects his worshippers. As the 20th century draws to a close human conscience and understanding is more refined, allowing man to play politics unfettered by false religion, on the basis of the civil code. At the same time religion will be protected from human distortion or corruption, unimpeded by earthly disputes or conflicts of power. For when religion is meshed with politics it transforms into an ideology, not a religion. Its followers become politicians or party members, not spiritual beings at all.

In today's world we have two movements. One of them consolidates and unites, the other splits and divides. And though the one contradicts the other, preventing the other from coming to fruition, both are still prevalent in society, as mankind waits for intervention to support the movement of unification as it consolidates and joins humanity, in

accordance with the dictates of human destiny.

The most fundamental of the reasons for the movement to sectarianism and division are tribalism, racism and the religio-politico.

Most people are still enslaved by tribalistic ideas, which restricts them to one particular club, party, city or community. They live and act according to the strictures of their own tribe, and for this reason are separated from people outside their particular group, cut off from the hope of integration.

Human tribalism dates back to the beginnings of history when the tribe was the only unit able to protect man and condition his loyalty. Despite the progress of human history most of the people, however, remained rooted in tribalistic ideas and attitudes. And never will their backwardness fade until a new understanding takes over, converting all from tribalism to universalism in which all human beings are one unit, equal regardless of their colour, origin, race, sex or language.

Racism has spread as people are encouraged to highlight divisions between people on the basis of their race. Colonialism, in particular, played an insidious role in instilling such feelings. At the present time we find this racism rooted in irrationality across the globe, with prejudice nourishing hostile attitudes between different races or inside the same nation. In some countries it took the name 'apartheid,' but in other countries, towns and villages it carries the same meaning if not the same name.

In my opinion tribalism and racism are now fully comprehensible to mankind. They should be isolated and cut off from human understanding, however much time it takes. Intellectuals everywhere have sought to counter both tribalism and racism to undermine them totally. In this respect the information revolution becomes considerable, as it unites people, erasing tribal attitudes and racist behaviour.

The most important factor behind sectarianism today is religio-political which conveys a sense of alarm to widen the separatism and

deepen the divide. The religio-politico has perverted faiths into ideologies, and in time this contagion has spread to other faiths, in turn corrupting yet more religious beliefs and raising its head in inter-human conflicts and animosities.

Ignorance, dogma, deviation from the faith and relative ethical code are the most important causes of this corruption of belief. First ignorance: most of the people are ignorant of their own faiths and those of others. They know little but rumours or slogans about their own faith, and what they know about other faiths is wrong, merely distorted shadows of ideas. The result is that they share little respect for other faiths, preferring to cut themselves off not only from other faiths but sometimes even from people of their own faiths who do not share their opinions.

Second the dogma: ideology turns faith into a dogma in which the faith is ossified, closed and very hostile towards others. Ideology negates the faith, turning it into an instrument for battle, not a basis on which to build and cooperate with others.

Third, deviation of the faith: almost all faiths once in the hands of the masses deviate from their original, and perhaps noble, tenets, turning from abstract faiths into primitive belief, ignoble dogma or even paganism. While most faiths cannot recognize this in their own faith, they can find it clearly in the faiths of others. So they condemn others of being primitive, ignoble and paganist. This condemnation fills them to the brim with pride, to the extent that they may oust others from their sight, choosing to eliminate them from humanity.

Fourth, a relative ethical code: While the ethical code is initially intended for all human beings, most religious people restrict the code not only to those of the same faith, but even to the specific group to which they subscribe. The result is that each sect limits the ethical code to themselves, closing themselves off from mankind. Some find in their relative ethical code justifications for the murder, injury or extermination of others.

These reasons and others are in fact the natural product of transforming a faith into a religio-plitico. True religion is open to all

mankind requiring each individual to refine him or herself, and elevate his or her conscience to be able to cooperate with all human beings. In contrast the religio-politico distorts faiths, hindering people from being united in one humanity, propagating misconstrued ideas through the strong pull of a blind faith and distorted feelings.

If we truly seek to unite humanity and flow with the movement of history which sets to gather mankind together and unite people in one nation, then we should devote much energy into returning religion to its base as a means for interrelating, interconnecting and integrating all human beings. This mission demands that we sever politics entirely from religion, to restore religion to the pedestal of pure understanding, respect for one's own faith and the faith of others. In the Qur'ān we have a verse which mark the dawning of such a movement:

> Lo! Those who believe (in that which is revealed into thee Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabeans – whoever believeth in God (Allāh) and the Last Day and doeth right – surely their reward is with their Lord, and thereshall nofear come upon them, neithe shall they grieve. (*Al-Qur'ān* II:62)

The same was reiterated in *Sūrah* V:69 of the Qur'ān in another form:

> Lo! Those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Sabeans, and Christians – whosoever believeth in God (Allāh) and the last day and doeth right – there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve!

Some Islamic scholars say that the faithful are restricted to what is mentioned in the above verses, some others say that the faithful mentioned in the two verses are just an example and the rule is opened to include others: Magos, Buddhists and Hindus amongst others.

These two verses could lead us to the true path for an understanding of faith and respect for each and every faithful believer, who keeps

his responsibility to God only. But in our daily lives on earth we should neither condemn each other nor believe that we hold a monopoly of the truth. Truth is one reality with many facets, and many paths lead to the same truth. Almost all these paths integrate, not abrogate, each other. Instilling such an understanding in the mind of mankind will change man's behaviour, and put him on the right track for development of the conscience and the true destiny for humanity.

COMMUNICATION, POPULATION, CHILD SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: AN ISLAMIC COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE

ABDUR-RAHMAN O.A. OLAYIWOLA

Abstract

The earth's population now (1992) is 5.47 billion – of whom 77 per cent live in developing countries – and growing faster than ever before. In Africa, the statistical evidence suggests that there are an estimated 600 million people on the continent. This raises the problematic issue of the rate of growth of the population vis-a-vis rate of growth of food supply.[1] Other effects of the high population growth rates are the mounting unemployment and deteriorating social services particularly education and health. This paper examines the problem of population communication, education and information in relation to child survival and development. The paper attempts to analyze the issues involved from a comparative perspective and to identify salient features of an Islamic communication perspective in terms of its principles and practical applications to Africa in particular and to human society in the world in general. It answers questions such as: (a) In view of the fact that Islam and other religions encourage the procreation of numerous offspring by marriage, would population control and family planning conflict with this stand?
(b) Is family planning, in the sense of contraception and of the regulation of childbearing, allowed or forbidden in Islam?
(c) What are the social, economic and familial justifications for population control and family planning, and what are the relevant texts in Muslim law? The paper concludes that there is no advantage in Africans being numerous if they are sickly, under-nourished, backward, poorly-educated, under-employed and crippled by abject poverty.

Introduction

> For the purpose of this exercise, I start from the proposition that rapid population growth in the developing world not only is undesirable for development ('modernization') and all that [that] implies for human welfare (education and literacy, health and nutrition, income and income distribution, status of women, human rights), but it is undesirable enough to warrant intervention by public policy.[1]

The above observation from Berelson – a leading proponent of family planning – is remarkable. It expresses the problem of population communication, education and information in unmistakable terms. It sees rapid population growth as undesirable for development, which is defined

as modernization, and includes almost all aspects of human welfare. Two decades ago, 1972 precisely, the earth's population was 3.84 billion, of whom 72 per cent lived in developing countries. Today, it is now 5.47 billion – of whom 77 per cent live in developing countries – and growing faster than ever before. Each year the number rises by 95 million – the planet's entire population about 1000 B.C.[2]

The Dilemma of African Population and Development: A Theoretical Interpretation

It is estimated by the United Nations that with the current population growth rate, Africa's population would double in 22 years and quadruple in 44 years, and increase eight fold in 66 years.[3] It is in the consequences of this increasing population growth rate set against Africa's limited capacity to feed herself that one sees the danger. The rates of natural increase (crude birthrates minus crude death rates) in many African countries are among the highest in the world. Also, African fertility levels are the highest in the world, although there are considerable regional and social variations.

In the same vein, some of the highest levels of mortality in the world are found among African populations. Communicable diseases– fever, smallpox, tetanus, diphtheria, and tuberculosis – are among the important causes of such mortality.

For many years, the neo-Malthusian paradigm has been the only one used for the study of African population and development. This approach suggests that population growth is a major obstacle to economic growth; slowing down population growth is therefore a necessary initial step in an economic strategy.

The early work of A. Coale and E. Hoover presents the basic hypothesis: whatever the indicators of economic development (per capita output, allocation of income, marginal rate of savings, and so on), low fertility is always more beneficial than high fertility. This model serves as the starting point for most research on population and development, and remains largely unchallenged.[4]

A brief summary would not be amiss: rapid population growth is detrimental to economic growth; fertility must therefore be reduced; family-planning programmes are then necessary to convince people to change their attitudes (to prefer smaller families), and eventually to modify their behaviour. Ultimately, knowledge and practice of family planning will be diffused by a demonstration effect.

Population Communication, Education and Information

To achieve the goal of disseminating information about population control, many African countries have embarked upon massive public enlightenment and promoted policies and programmes aimed at reducing population growth rates in addition to their giving material, financial, official, moral support and encouragement to family-planning programmes.

Also, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) has highlighted population communication, education and information activites for programmes in the African region. In fact, the Fund was established in order to help the developing countries to carry out their population programmes and to expand the scope of the activities of the United Nations agencies in the field of population studies and control.

According to UNFPA, population communication is aimed at fostering interest, creating demand and otherwise supporting population programme activities among a host of other objectives. Population education takes place in formal education settings such as schools and colleges, or in non-formal instructional activities involving adult learners or out-of-school youth; while population information includes the technical and statistical information that is used to create awareness of population issues among governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOS), communities, families and individuals.[5]

Commenting on the differences among the overlapping and interdependent processes of population communication activities, UNFPA stated that population information activities bring facts and issues to the attention of an audience, the primary objective being the provision of materials for stimulating discussions, while population communication is

designed to motivate the audience to action. On the other hand, the aim of population education is to foster genuine understanding of problems and possible solutions to population matters, since education usually exposes an individual or an audience to learning, over a longer time than does a communication or information activity.

Expectedly, therefore, population information should cover a range of activities involving the creation, processing and dissemination of population-related content destined for a variety of target audiences. Sources of population information include demographic statistics, results of social surveys, reports on the state of the economy and social services, among a host of other sources. These are usually collected and disseminated by national official agencies, such as the Ministries of National Planning, Population Commissions and other related institutions.

The Relevance of An Islamic Communication Approach to Population, Child Survival and Development in Africa

To be sure, it is not impossible to find people who still have questions agitating their minds on the intervention of religions in matters that are considered secular. Such old questions include: Is religion really a fact of life? Should anyone who is not a religious believer take any interest in the debates on communication, population, child survival and development within the religions?

From the viewpoint of the religions themselves, the question is: Can the religions enter the public realm of discussion of communication, population, child survival and development on the public realm's own terms? From the viewpoint of the public realm the question is: Can the rest of us accept in principle some of the conclusions of the religions on these issues even when we do not accept their explicitly religious or theological warrants? If we do, what reasons can we give one another for those agreements? Should the religious classical statements on communication, population, child survival and development be considered responsible candidates for conversation and argument in the public realm?

A prior question also needs reflection: What is this public realm

into which both religious and secular interpretations of these issues must enter? For it is in the public realm where finally we all either do or do not meet. It is the public realm where religion, too, must address its questions and its conclusions on the issues involved, not on its own inner theological warrants, but in terms acceptable, in principle, to the public realm itself.[6]

The answers to such perplexing questions are not far-fetched. Even if we cannot agree on the origins of a classic work of religion, we can still agree in some measure on its effects. Those effects can only be described as public, that is, shared, open to all human beings. The effects of a classic religious tradition are public in that they make disclosive and transformative possibilities available to all. Their publicness, indeed their mode of truth, is precisely their disclosive and transformative suggestion of possibilities. In fact, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* says that 'as far as scholars have discovered, there has never existed any people, anywhere, at any time, who were not in some sense religious.'[7]

Whatever any individual's personal religious beliefs may be, or even if there is some antagonism towards religion, it is difficult for anyone to deny that religions have had considerable impact on societies in all continents, including Africa. Religions have often been deeply involved in political matters, in cultural developments; they have been used to legitimise, supress or inspire regimes, philosophies and artistic movements.

Religious institutions have, for good or ill, dominated or undermined secular establishments of many kinds. Individuals have been inspired by religion to live up to the highest possible personal standards, or provoked to display the basest instincts. It is not possible to understand the history of most, if not all, countries without knowledge of the religions which have flourished there and influenced, moulded or corrupted both leaders and masses.[8] Religion with its beliefs, doctrines, ideals, codes, practices and techniques, exerts a vast influence over the economic, social, cultural and political life of human beings and nations.

Formulating an Islamic communication perspective to solving the problem of population communication, education and information be-

comes more pertinent if we consider the fact that Muslims constitute over a fifth of the world's population inhabiting more than 120 countries on the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, including two million in Britain and a quarter of the population of the former Soviet Union, and that the Islamic countries wield considerable economic clout.

Africa is the most important continent in the world of Islam. Of the over fifty member-countries of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), more than two-thirds have a Muslim majority. Over sixty per cent of Africa's estimated six hundred million people are Muslims, making it the only continent which has a Muslim majority.

The history of Islam in Africa is rich and illustrious, stretching back to the time of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). Islam gave most of Africa its 'Golden Era,' and Africa's historic role as the first *Dār al-Hijrah*, a refuge to which the Prophet (pbuh) enjoined some of his Companions to seek succour during the early Makkan period cannot be forgotten. Yet Africa's Islamic identity remains suppressed and the achievement of its Muslim inhabitants unknown.[9] According to Burke, it was the Islamic tradition of social inquiry that helped the world in general, and Europe in particular, to establish the modern scholarly tradition in various physical, biological, and social sciences.

The Muslim Family and the Child

Childbirth among Muslims is an occasion for joy. The baby is welcomed and cherished, and people pray for him or her to live long and to be blessed with good character. Children are regarded as a precious trust to be nurtured physically and spiritually. This loving guidance in child upbringing usually results in secure and cooperative children, accustomed to helping others, working hard and respecting legitimate authority. The exceptions may most often be found among the very rich who sometimes spoil their children with luxuries, and among the very poor who may find difficulty in taking proper care of their children, especially if they are many.

Parents are required to realise that their children have a right to

life and that their life is sacred. Hence Islam put an effective stop to infanticide which was practised both in Biblical times and pre-Islamic Arabia where children were sometimes killed for economic (Qur'ān, XVII:31) or social reasons (Qur'ān, LXXXI:8). Allāh says:

> ...do not kill your children for fear of poverty: it is We who shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily, killing them is a great sin. (Qur'ān,XVII:31, M.Asad)

Islam also takes a serious view of the fact that parents often wrongly pay more attention to the material needs of their children at the expense of the spiritual ones. Parents are required to educate their children properly, giving them a balanced education thus ensuring that they are well-informed about their faith and their duties to Allāh.

Parents are also required to give their children adequate food, clothing and shelter. Allāh has created in the hearts of human beings tenderness towards children as well as desire for them (Qur'ān, III:14). Parents must be thankful to Allāh when a child is born to them, be it male or female. The parents are required to ensure that justice is done among their children, making no distinction between them–for example, between male and female. They should all be treated equally.

Family life is very important in Islam. It is in the atmosphere of security and love (Qur'ān,XXX:21) that children learn their first lessons of life. Allāh says:

> He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts).... (Qur'ān,XXX:21, Y.Ali)

Under the watchful care of the parents, and usually the extended family, children are taught to worship and obey Allāh. They are taught good conduct, good manners, and the moral and social values of Islam. They learn to respect their elders and be kind to their juniors. They are taught that obedience to parents is a duty next to obedience to Allāh:

> ...thy Sustainer has ordained that you worship none but Him.

And do good unto thy parents.... (Qur'ān, XVII:23, M.Asad)

Islamic Communication on Population Education and Information

The Islamic injunctions on love of children do not mean that families are required to have more and more children all the time. For example, some parents may wish to delay pregnancy for a while for health or other reasons. Others may wish to have no more children, if they already have more than they can reasonably care for, or if the mother is ill or exhausted by frequent childbirth.

To understand the Islamic communication on population education and information, it is important to consider the sayings of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) which comment on it.

A Companion of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), Jābir bin 'Abd-Allāh, is reported to have said:

> We used to practise *'Azl* (*coitus interruptus*) during the time of the Prophet. He came to know about it, but did not forbid us. (*Ḥadīth*: Muslim)

In another version, Jābir reported:

> We used to practise *coitus interruptus* during the time of the Prophet while the Qur'ān was still being revealed. (*Ḥadīth*: Bukhārī and Muslim)

The clear inference is that since the Qur'ān did not prohibit *coitus interruptus*, nor did the Prophet, it is not against the laws of Islam.

The Views of the Muslim Jurists

The great Muslim jurists of the past – of the Ḥanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī schools of Islamic jurisprudence, as well as those of the Shī'ah school, were unanimous in saying that *coitus interruptus* was

allowed. The only point of difference between them was over the consent of the wife. The majority maintained that the wife's agreement was required, since she had a right to children, and to complete sexual fulfilment, which *coitus interruptus* was judged to diminish.[10]

Al-Ghazzālī, the respected Islamic scholar of the 11th-12th century C.E. stated that he regarded *coitus interruptus* as approved, and refuted the arguments of those who disapproved of it. He gave several reasons for his view, including the need to preserve the health and physical beauty of the wife against the hazards of child-bearing and childbirth.

He also argued that the increase in the number of dependents multiplied material difficulties, led to extra toil in order to earn a living, and tempted men to engage in immoral or illegal transactions to meet their responsibilities. Other reasons given for allowing *coitus interruptus* were to preserve the life of a woman where pregnancy involved danger and also to care for the well-being of children.

It is pertinent to assert that *coitus interruptus* was not the only form of contraception practised in the centuries that followed the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). Some women also used intra-vaginal suppositories and tampons. In this case, some jurists ruled that the woman should seek the husband's permission, while others ruled that she need not do so.

Al-Razi in the 9th/10th century C.E. listed 176 contraceptive or abortifacient prescriptions. Ibn Sīnā in the 10th/11th century C.E. included similar prescriptions in his *Canon of Medicine* – which in its translations dominated European medicine from the 12th to the 17th centuries C.E. However, the European scholars who based their own work on the *Canon* suppressed the family planning information contained in it because of the Church's opposition to contraception.[11]

Reasons for Family Planning in Islam

Child-spacing, limitation of family size, provision of adequate nutrition and accommodation for children and mothers, ensuring good

upbringing and education for children, prevention of social and economic hazards to the family and society, such as debt, begging, theft, and all forms of corrupt enrichment, protection of the health and safety of the mother and her good looks, the reduction of the pressure on social services and the environment, and the improvement of the quality of life for future generations are some of the reasons for family planning in Islam.

The form of family planning which finds the widest support among Muslims is that of child spacing allowing – an interval of 2-3 years between pregnancies. This is because it is based on Qur'ānic recommendation of prolonged breast-feeding.

> And (Allāh says): 'We have enjoined upon man goodness towards his parents: his mother bore him by bearing strain upon strain, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years. (Qur'ān, XXXI:14, M.Asad)

This prolonged breast-feeding extends the period when the child's health is protected by the mother's milk. It is in line with the Prophet's advice for a couple to avoid a new pregnancy while the wife is still suckling a child.

Asmā' bint Yazīd reported in an authentic *Ḥadīth* that Prophet Muhammad said:

> Do not kill your children indirectly, for the (suckling of a child with) *ghayl* overtakes the rider and throws him off his horse. (*Ḥadīth*: Abū Dāwūd)

Ghayl is the milk of a mother who becomes pregnant again while still suckling a baby. The *Ḥadīth* could be understood to mean that a child suckled in this way grows weak and in many cases the weakness endures until adulthood.

The spacing of children has obvious benefits for the health of mother and child It allows her to recover physically from the strain of pregnancy and childbirth and to breastfeed for the

prescribed period without putting her own health or that of the child under strain.

Child-spacing also allows a mother to give her time and attention to the new baby, and saves her the psychological stress that sometimes afflicts mothers who have too many young children to look after at the same time.

The support for family planning as a means of limiting the family size to a manageable number is found in the following *āyah* of the Qur'ān:

> ...and it is incumbent on him who has begotten the child to provide in a fair manner for their sustenance and clothing .... (Qur'ān,II:223, M.Asad)

Prevention of social and economic hazards to the family and society as a reason for family planning, is also supported by the following *āyah* of the Qur'ān:

> No human being shall be burdened more than he is well able to bear... nor because of his child , he who has begotten it... (Qur'ān, II:223, M.Asad)

Protection of the health and safety of the mother as a reason for family planning is butressed by the following *āyah* of the Qur'ān:

> ...Neither shall a mother be made to suffer because of her child....(Qur'ān,II:223, M.Asad)

In fact, statistical evidence shows that after a fourth pregnancy, women's health risks increase with each successive pregnancy. It is also established that childbirth after the age of 35 carries increased risk to the mother and increased likelihood of abnormality in the child.

Protection of the good look of the mother is supported by a *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad. This reason for family planning was taken seriously by the early jurists, hence it should not be disregarded.

A woman worn out by childbearing, repeatedly pregnant, and preoccupied with housework and child care may neglect her appearance, lose her attraction, and be unable to fulfil her husband's need for companionship. And that would be a negation of a saying of the Prophet Muhammad:

> The best of wives is she who, when you look at her, pleases you... (*Hadīth*: Bukhārī).

This point is a known cause in some cases of extra-marital affairs, marriage breakdown, abandonment and divorce.

Methods of Family Planning

The most acceptable modern methods of contraception, from the Islamic viewpoint, are those generally considered to be closest to the *coitus interruptus* mentioned earlier in the *Hadīth*, which prevents the meeting of the sperm and the ovum.

These include the condom and various other barrier methods such as the cervical cap, I.U.D.'s and so on, provided the method causes no harm to the spouses, and is with their mutual consent.

However, some other scholars of Islam raise no objection to the use of the contraceptive pill or injection. They maintained that they should be allowed because the purpose of the pill is the same as the purpose of the barrier methods, although the method is not analogous with *coitus interruptus*.

In such cases of difference of opinion among scholars, it is considered better to err on the side of caution. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the contraceptive pill can have a number of undesirable side-effects, physical and psychological, which affect individual women in different ways. Nor is there yet reliable information about the connection between long term use of some types of contraceptive pill with cancer and other diseases.

In the light of these known and unknown dangers, it may be considered safer to follow methods that are less hazardous. This caution is particularly necessary in developing countries where medical care and supervision of family planning are often inadequate.

Abortion

The consensus of the Muslim jurists is that abortion is prohibited after the foetus is completely formed, and has been given a soul. This, according to a saying of the Prophet, takes place 120 days after conception. However, there is an exception to this rule as the jurists agree that, should it be reliably established that the continuation of the pregnancy would lead to the death of the mother, abortion must be performed. This is in accordance with the general principle of the Islamic law that the lesser of two evils be chosen. A leading jurist explained thus:

> This is because the origin of the foetus is the mother. Moreover, her life is already established with full duties and resposibilities. She is also a pillar of the family. It is, therefore, not appropriate to sacrifice her life for that of the foetus which has not yet acquired a personality and has no responsibilities or obligations to fulfil.[12]

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to show that from the Islamic communication viewpoint, population education, information and control are the responsibilities of both the government and the governed. The government, in particular, has a very important role to play in promoting child-spacing and responsible parenthood for the good of the individual as well as the society.[13]

Moreover, since health, education, social welfare and economic planning are the responsibilities of the government, it deserves the cooperation of citizens towards ensuring that these are properly carried out.

It is also important that government family planning programmes

should rely on the dissemination of factual information on population control through the family, the schools, the mass media, religious institutions, government parastatals, religious leaders, local government functionaries, traditional rulers among a host of other institutions.

If the rules and principles of Islamic communication on population, child survival and development as enunciated in this paper are adhered to, the growth of population will be moderated, which will facilitate social and economic development. It will keep the population growth within the scope of the government's ability to provide for all citizens essential amenities such as schools, training colleges, clinics, hospitals, welfare facilities, provision for the care of the disabled and the handicapped, clean water, food, shelter, electricity and fuel, as well as employment opportunities. It will also facilitate the control of pollution and the protection of the environment. There is no advantage in Africans being numerous if they are sickly, under-nourished, backward, poorly-educated, under-employed and crippled by abject poverty.

And as the above analysis of the Islamic communication views on family planning depicts, the consensus is that it is permitted to prevent or delay pregnancy through methods analogous to *coitus interruptus* (withdrawal).

Some Muslim jurists consider as a valid reason for contraception the avoidance of danger to life and health of the mother, on the basis of the Qur'ānic *āyah*:

> ...And make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction... (Qur'ān,II:195, Y.Ali)
>
> ...Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves; for verily Allāh hath been to you Most Merciful! (Qur'ān,IV:29, Y.Ali)
>
> On no soul doth Allāh place a burden greater than it can bear. (Qur'ān,II:286, Y.Ali)

Another reason for contraception accepted by some Muslim

scholars is the fear of being unable to take proper care of additional children, whereby a person may be driven to poverty and to unlawful activities in order to sustain the family's needs. Couples, therefore, owe it as a religious, economic, medical and social duty to ensure that they follow the divine injunctions and apostolic Traditions regarding the spacing of their children and having no more than the number of children they can adequately and conveniently care for, and without harm to mothers and children.

NOTES

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(2) See UN agencies, World Resources Institute, WWF (Worldwide Fund for Nature) in *The Independent* (London: Wednesday 3 June, 1992).

(3) E. Hansen, 'Reflections on the African Crisis' *AAPS NEWSLETTER* (April-June 1988), pp. 5-21.

(4) A. Coale and E. Hoover, *Population Growth and Economic Development in Low Income Countries* (Princetion: Princeton University Press, 1958). Three major books on African population reconfirm the dominance of this approach: C. Caldwell *et al.* (eds.), *Population Growth and Socioeconomic Growth in West Africa* (New York and London: 1975); P. Cantrelle (ed.), *Population in African Development* (Liege: 1974); and S. Ominde and C. Ejiogu (eds.), *Population Growth and Economic Development in Africa* (New York and London: 1972).

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(6) For representative work here, see R. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976); J. Habermas, 'Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence,' *Inquiry* 1970); R.O. Olayiwola, 'Nationalism and Nation-building in Islam' in C.S. Momoh (ed.), *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance*, vol.iii: *Religion in Nation-Building* (Lagos: C.B.A.A.C. University of Lagos, 1987); Also, published in *The Islamic Quarterly*, Islamic Cultural Centre, London, vol. xxxiv, no. 2, 1990, pp.101-114; R.O. Olayiwola, 'Human Rights in Islam,' *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. xxxvi, no.4, 1992, pp.264-279. London; R.O. Olayiwola, 'Islam and Secularization in Nigeria,' in W. Crotty and J. Scarritt (eds.), *Political Reform and Developing Nations* (Urbana, Illinois. PSO, DPSC and JAI Press, U.S.A., 1993), chapter 31, p. 41; R. O. Olayiwola, ' Islam and

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(7) *Mankind's Search for God* (New York: Watch Tower Bible, 1990), p. 19.

(8) J. Hinnells (ed.), *A Handbook of Living Religions* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1991), p.11.

(9) See L Hobson, 'Islam in Africa,' Paper submitted o IQRA Trust, London, 1992; A. Atterbury, *Islam in Africa* (London: Darf Repri it, 1987); J. Trimingham, *The Influence of Islam upon Africa* (London: Longman 1968); R. Bravmann, *African Islam* (Washington: S.I. Press, 1983); J. Bu ce, 'The Day the Universe Changed' (London: BBC, 1986).

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(11) M.M. Sharif (ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol.i (Pakistan: Philosophical Congress, O.H.W., 1963).

(12) M. Shaltūt, *al-Fatāwā* (Cairo: Dar al-Shurufe, 1974), p.290.

(13) *Islam and Family Planning: Summary of the Proc eedings of the International Islamic Conference* (Rabat, Morocco: Interna ional Planned Parenthood Federation, Dec., 1971). Also, see H. 'Abd al-'Ati, *The Family Structure in Islam* (Lagos: IPB, 1982); Y. al-Qardāwī, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1960).

THE PORTRAYAL OF THE ARABS AND THE ARAB LANDSCAPE IN HERGE'S *THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN*

YASIR SULEIMAN

Introduction

CHILDREN'S views concerning foreign cultures and places are formed and moulded by a complex web of factors. One such factor is films, including cartoon films. Another factor is children's literature. As Shavit points out 'society views childhood as the most important period of life and tends to account for most of adult behaviour on the basis of childhood experiences.'[1] In dealing with children's literature, Shavit recognises its importance as a 'vehicle for education (and as) a major means of teaching and indoctrinating the child.'[2]

Our concern in this article is not the 'proper'use of children's literature as a legitimate element in the educational process; but, rather, the way in which such literature is exploited in order to create stereotyped images of other cultures and places, or, parasitically, to foster and propagate such images. More specifically, our interest here lies in the way in which the Arabs, their culture and their landscape are presented in a stereotyped fashion in children's literature.

For this purpose we will examine the following four books in Herge's series *The Adventures of Tintin* (henceforth, *Adventures*): *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, *The Crab with the Golden Claws*, *The Red Sea Sharks*, and *Land of Black Gold*. The main events in these four *Adventures* take place in different parts of the Arab World, thus, the main protagonist in them, Tintin, is brought face to face with the Arabs and their cultural and environmental milieux. In investigating the topic under consideration, we must, however, first acknowledge the important contribution made by El-Asmar[3] in studying the image of the Arabs in Hebrew children's literature. El-Asmar's work was instrumental in triggering the present writer's interest in this topic.

Before embarking on this task, however, we must deal with two issues. The *first* concerns the status of the *Adventures* as literature. It is not our intention to debate whether or not the Adventures qualify as works of literature, in the narrowest sense of the term. Such a debate would prove to be both futile and diversionary. Suffice it to say here, that the term 'children's literature' is used in the present context in a broad sense to refer to writing directed at children, whether it is children-authored or adult-authored.

The *second* – and more substantive – issue concerns the extent to which the stereotypes of the Arabs and their landscape, as presented by Herge in the *Adventures*, can be seriously taken. It might be argued that because Herge's portrayal of the Arabs is in the form of caricature and is in line with his portrayal of other nations and cultures in other *Adventures* in the series, these stereotypes should not be taken as representative.

Upon first examination, this appears to be a strong and convincing argument, until one realises that what matters is *not* the way in which the adult investigator processes these caricature stereotypes, but the manner in which the child himself handles them. It is hardly unlikely that the child looks at the *Adventures* in their totality. The investigation of this issue is, therefore, compounded and is no longer a straightforward matter.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that even though the child who is exposed to Herge's stereotypes may not internalise an altogether negative view of the Arabs, he is very unlikely to internalise a positive or, at least, a neutral view. This, of course is under the assumption that the child has not previously been exposed to any relevant input, whether positive or negative. Consequently, no enlightened and well-intentioned individual can afford to run the risk of exposing children to such stereotypes.

The force of this argument becomes more apparent when one discovers that Herge's stereotypes do, to a large extent, overlap with the portrayal of the Arabs in the various sectors of the Western media[4] and in English popular fiction[5] – two channels of communication which play a crucial role in fostering and moulding the stereotypical image of the Arabs in the West. Consequently, this overlap cannot be complacently attributed

to mere coincidence and just quietly ignored. It is, in fact, part and parcel of a syndrome which also involves films and, to some extent, the intellectual paradigm called 'Orientalism.'[6]

Furthermore, the suggestion that the Arabs are not the only race to be stereotypically portrayed by Herge, does not constitute a strong enough argument for the view that the Arab's image in the *Adventures* must be taken with a 'grain of salt.' If anything, this argument further supports the position concerning the undesirability of exposing young children to stereotypical images of other cultures and places, even if these images are caricatures in nature. This follows from the fact that such caricature stereotypes often correspond with the stereotypical perceptions prevalent in one culture about another, as may be established from the rest of Herge's *Adventures*. It is this correspondence which bestows on the caricature-stereotypes of the kind found in Herge, a 'perceptual' reality approaching 'the truth.' The psychological and intellectual implications of this perceptual 'reality' tend to deputise for the 'truth,' in people's minds, if not actually assume the status of 'truth.'

The Adventures: *A General View*

The *Adventures of Tintin* -- some of which have been turned into cartoon films--are sold worldwide as children's books, appearing in at least twenty-seven languages, including Arabic. They all conform to the same thematic structure: each *Adventure* begins with a mysterious problem into which Tintin, the main character in the *Adventures*, is drawn in the attempt to find a solution to it. Tintin's preliminary investigations invariably reveal that the initial problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved without dealing with a host of attendant, *albeit* subordinate, problems. The strongly adventurous flavour of Tintin's investigations is concocted with the aroma of the persistent and unexpected dangers which beset his path and which make constant demands on his ingenuity, sharp wit, steady nerves and unfailing sense of initiative. The measured and rhythmical unravelling of the plot of each one of the *Adventures* succeeds in gripping the reader's imagination, who must wait until the very last page of each *Adventure* before his heightened and sustained interest in the outcome of Tintin's investigations is fully satisfied and rewarded.

The *Adventures* convey their content through words and pictures. Like Siamese twins, the words and the pictures are inseparable from each other; they form a coherent whole. The pictures are clear and brightly drawn, and the language accompanying them has a distinct quality of situational transparency. By virtue of this inalienable word-picture association, the *Adventures* are characterised by a strong sense of content-immediacy, which quality is further enhanced by the simplicity and straightforwardness of the characters, both the 'good guys' and the 'baddies.' There are no twists or sudden surprises in the characterisation: the 'good guys' as well as the 'baddies' behave in stereotype ways. The temporal progress of the plot is indicated either linguistically by a distinct form of handwriting, or visually by variations in the brightness of the pictures. Events taking place at night, for example, are characteristically embodied in dark pictures. Figures in such pictures are painted in silhouette form against a dark and, often, threatening background. A fairly light shade of grey is used in pictures which, for instance, portray events taking place in the dark and narrow alleys of the desert walled-towns. The hubbub and the hustle and bustle which prevail in the *souks* of these towns, and the high walls which surround them, as though they were fortresses, symbolise the confusion and the atmosphere of siege which engulf Tintin's life at that particular moment in the progress of the plot. Clearly, content and situational immediacy are successfully imparted in these *Adventures*, so much so that one could justifiably claim that Tintin's adventures are almost film-like in nature.

The Arab Landscape

The interplay between word and picture is exploited to its full potential in painting a bleak and threatening picture of the supposed landscape of the Arabs. Not unexpectedly, the dominant image of the Arab landscape is that of an 'empty horizon ... nothing but endless desert.'[7] Sanddunes stretch for miles and there are frequent sandstorms. Barren and threateningly inhospitable, the desert presents evidence of its mercilessly destructive power in the shape of a disintegrating skeleton of a dead camel,[8] which, we are told, 'died of thirst, of course.'[9] The scorching heat of the blazing sun, coupled with the lack of water, spell out immediate and tangible danger to Tintin, Snowy, his dog, and to the more often than not

drunken Captain whose plane crashed in the middle o f the Sahara Desert. Suffering from dehydration and exhaustion the miserable Captain describes the surrounding desert terrain as the 'land of thirst.'[10] The same idea is reiterated in *Cigars of the Pharaoh*. At one point, Tintin is unexpectedly attacked in the middle of the desert. His attacker misses him, but hits his water-bottle causing it to burst. The water gushes out and is quickly absorbed by the thirsty desert sand, whereupon a distressed Tintin remarks: 'He may have missed me, but he hit my water-bottle ... and that's nearly as bad.'[11]

The Arab landscape is portrayed as a land of stark and exceedingly harsh contrasts. The scorching heat of the desert during the day gives way to freezing temperatures at night which, in *Land of Black Gold*, deprive Tintin of his much needed sleep: 'It's freezing cold ... if only I could get to sleep.'[12] Another feature of the Arab landscape is the absence of any landmarks in the desert to which the inexperienced traveller could refer in order to find his way about. This is most effectively illustrated in *Land of Black Gold* on pages 29-30. Here, the two caricature-type detectives, Thompson and Thomson, follow the wheel tracks of their jeep on the assumption that they were made by another jeep. Naturally, this creates additional wheel tracks which the detectives continue to follow. Upon seeing a large number of such tracks clearly marked on the desert sands, one of the two detectives shouts with great joy and an uncontrollable sense of relief: 'We're obviously getting near a big town ....'[13] His hopes are more or less instantly dashed by a ferocious sandstorm which, ironically, saves him and his companion from the destructive outcome of his foolish expectations.

Clearly, the Arab landscape, as represented by the desert, proves to be both deceptive and treacherous, playing havoc with the 'normal' and, on the surface of it, 'reasonable' expectations of the unwary traveller. The same two detectives, the drink-sodden captain and Tintin, at different times, fall prey to the deceptive appearance of mirages. Thirsty and tired, they often mistake mirages for lakes and oases. However, their joy and celebration at seeing them prove to be short-lived and, sometimes, the precursors of annoyingly frustrating and painful happenings . The two detectives Thompson and Thomson mistake a mirage for a lake. One of

them suggests to the other that they go for a swim in order to refresh themselves, but when they take a dive into the 'inviting water,' they land on their faces in the sand.[14]

The two detectives quickly learn, through bitter experience, not to trust the illusory appearance of lakes and oases in the desert. However, this hard-won lesson proves to be as treacherous as its counterpart, which consists of wrongly taking for lakes mirages. Approaching what seems like a lake in the desert, one of the detectives alerts his companion, who happens to be driving the jeep at the time, to its existence, and he asks him to drive round it. The driver totally discounts the warning, and, scornfully, responds by saying: 'Me? Drive round something that's nothing but something you think is something but is nothing? I never heard such rubbish! We're going straight ahead!' To their chagrin, they plunge deep into the water.

The cumulative picture of the Arab landscape which emerges from the *Adventures* is that of a waterless and destructive land. It is also a land of harsh contrasts in which intense heat during the day gives way to bitterly cold temperatures at night. More importantly, however, it is a deceptive and treacherous land in which the disjunction between the real and the fictitious is very hard to discern and consistently maintain. Its waters, being infested with sharks, are equally treacherous and dangerous. As such, the desert and its surrounding seas prove to be the ideal playground for gunrunners and drug-smugglers, attracting to it the worst kinds of Europeans, including pirates and unscrupulous profiteers and traders. The moral depravity of the Arabs, as will be explained later, turns out to be fully consistent with the harsh and treacherous reality of their landscape.

Arab towns are also depicted in the *Adventures*. The Arab town is invariably portrayed as being surrounded by a high and impregnable wall. Access to its narrow streets and dark alley-ways is gained through an arched gateway. The buildings have small windows and are gaudily coloured. Often the houses appear to be in a bad state of repair. Looking at it from the surrounding desert, the Arab town has the appearance of a fortress, with one or two minarets sticking over the horizon. Inside, it is

a scene of most chaotic confusion.

The over-all picture of the Arab town imparts a sense of the mysterious and strengthens the feeling of disjunction which exists between Tintin's orderly world and that of the Arabs he comes across. In the towns, the oppressive heat of the expansive desert is paralleled by the oppressive atmosphere created by the all-surrounding wall. Similarly, the deceptive nature of the desert is paralleled by the often impending dangers of the blind corners of the tortuous alley-ways. The featureless face of the desert is paralleled by the seemingly patternless mode of life in the town. Instead of emphasising and punctuating the difference between the barren desert and the town, the town-walls negate this difference. Consequently, it is no accident that, for saboteurs and unscrupulous profiteers, the Arab town is regarded as the natural extension of the desert enveloping it, and that, in turn, of the shark-infested waters which surround it. The ultimate judgement concerning the Arab landscape is expressed by the Portuguese trader, Senhor Oliveira who, on seeing Tintin unexpectedly in the Arab town where he lives, exclaims: 'Now, what brings you to this god-forsaken land?'[15]

The Arabs

The Arabs are portrayed in a wholly unflattering and negative way. They differ in their appearance from their European counterparts, both in terms of their physical features and in their apparel. For the most part, Arab men tend to have sharp and unwelcoming facial features and expressions. Their elongated faces, pointed beards, long hooked noses and extremely dark skin set them apart from Tintin and his European companions. In *The Crab With the Golden Claws*, the captain refers to the Arabs as 'toffee-noses, tramps, savages [and] carpet-sellers,'[16] and he gives vent to his racist feelings by calling an Arab a 'Blackmoor, anthricite, coconut fuzzy-wuzzy, cannibal,'[17] 'liquorice'[18] and 'negro.'[19] The poor ones amongst the Arabs often look emaciated and are dressed in rags, while the rich ones lavishly wear the 'traditional' Arab costume and seem to suffer from excessive over-eating. The only Arabs to be seen in European clothes are the soldiers, although they invariably replace the beret worn by European soldiers with the *Kaffiyeh*. The women are rarely

seen in public, and whenever they venture outside the confines of their homes, they are completely veiled in black from head to toe. Consequently, it is impossible to get any impression of their physique or of their facial features. Furthermore, their absence from public life gives the impression that Arab society is a completely male-dominated society. Not only do the Arabs look physically different from Europeans, but they also behave in a strange and, from the European point of view, quite inexplicable manner. Considering the fact that 'normality' is implicitly defined from a European perspective, the Arabs' habit of taking their shoes off before entering their mosques is regarded as, to say the least, bizarre. An alien people, with an equally alien culture, the Arabs use a strange foreign language with an equally strange and often – even to Arab readers – incomprehensible script. Consequently, the interaction between the Arabs' language and their culture gives rise to a strange mode of expression. This is particularly reflected in the wealth of scurrilous expressions used by the Arabs to revile one another: 'verminous beggar, crawling worm, son of a mangy dog,'[20] 'infidel dog,'[21] and 'stinking hyena [and] slimy serpent.'[22] This abusive use of language by the Arabs is considered unbecoming of such decent Europeans as Tintin. One scene in *Land of Black Gold* most clearly illustrates this point. When Sheikh Bab El-Ehr is hit by a pile of propaganda leaflets dropped by an enemy air-craft, he vents his anger and gives expression to his fury by shouting in Arabic 'May God curse you, son of a bitch! Damn your father, you bedouine.'[23] Snowy, Tintin's faithful dog, intervenes at this stage and tells Tintin: 'Such language! ... Don't listen to him, Tintin ... even in Arabic!'[24]

This theme of the 'otherness' of the Arabs and their alien culture, *vis-a-vis* Europeans and European culture, is given its most explicit articulation in *Land of Black Gold*. Tintin's main task in this *Adventure* is to try to resolve the mystery of the exploding petrol. His investigations take him to the fictitious state of Khemed and to a meeting with Emir Mohammad Ben Khalish Ezab. Here he comes face to face with an unscrupulous German entrepreneur by the name of Muller who heads a clandestine operation to promote the interests of an oil company he represents. Muller introduces himself to the Emir Ben Khalish Ezab as Professor Smith and tries to win form him an oil concession for his company. The Emir refuses to grant Muller the concession he wants, and,

thus, in an attempt to force the Emir to give in, Muller kidnaps his son Abdullah. Tintin comes to the rescue. He finds the missing prince, helps free him and conclusively establishes that Muller was behind the mystery of the exploding petrol. When Tintin informs the Emir of Professor Smith's real identity, and of this duplicitous and culpable involvement both in the mystery of the exploding petrol and in the kidnapping of his son, the Emir flies into a fit of rage and threatens to punish Muller, alias Professor Smith, most severely: 'That reptile! Where is he? Impale him instantly!'[25] Upon seeing and hearing the Emir's reaction, Tintin calms him down and tells him that Muller is in the hands of the police. He also tells the Emir, whose reaction he seems to have accurately anticipated, that he has already promised Muller 'a fair trial.'[26] The Emir reluctantly acquiesces in this promise, and he makes his feelings known by telling Tintin:'By Allah! How you Westerners complicate things! We men of the East are far more expeditious!'[27]

This story clearly illustrates the difference between Tintin's Western culture and the Emir's Arab culture. Whereas Tintin subscribes to a value-system in which fairness, even to a criminal and unscrupulous profiteer, is of prime importance, Emir Muhammad Ben Khalish Ezab adheres to a patently inferior value system which sanctions brutality and summary justice.

The Arabs' reluctance to accept the superior Western value-system is totally at variance with their enthusiasm for Western material goods. Their insatiable hunger for Western products makes them easy prey for the hard-sell tactics of such unscrupulous swindlers as Senhor Oliveira da Figuera. In *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, Senhor Oliveira sets up temporary shop, called the 'solo supermarket' by the Arabs[28] at the edge of the desert. He announces his arrival by means of powerful, battery operated loudspeakers and declares that he has brought his customers 'the wonders of the Western World.'[29] The Arabs flock to Senhor Oliveira's 'solo supermarket,' this outpost of Western civilisation, and, with expressions of obvious delight and joy on their faces, they are seen walking away laden with their newly acquired Western goods. Needless to say, most of the goods seen in their possession are totally inappropriate or unsuitable within the context of their material culture. For example, one of the Arabs

is seen walking away with a box in his hand and wearing a bowler hat on top of his *Kaffiyeh*. In selling him the hat, Senhor Oliveira appeals to his vanity and, worse still, takes advantage of his ignorance; he tells him: 'What about this hat? Fit for a Pharoah! Make you the best dressed man in the Oasis.'[30] Similarly, in *Land of Black Gold*, Senhor Oliveira unscrupulously convinces a well-dressed Arab to buy a pair of roller-skates! When Tintin sees that, he remarks: 'What a salesman!'

The above examples show that the Arabs, by their backwardness and lack of a sense of discrimination, lay themselves open to exploitation by Western salesmen. However, this 'exploitation' is thought to be justified, precisely because of the Arabs' backwardness and their inability to put Western products, compatible with their material culture, to their appropriate use. For example, an Arab takes a bite of a cake of soap he has bought from Senhor Oliveira, thinking it to be an ordinary cake. Of course, Senhor Oliveira cannot be held responsible for the Arab's wrong use of the soap, or for his inability to recognise it as such after he has had a bite of it. The Arab's anger and suspicion seem therefore to be unjustified and, if anything, must be blamed on his ignorance of the proper nature and use of Western products.[31]

The Arab's ignorance is related to his desert mentality. The tent and the desert, with their ways and modes of behaviour, condition the Arab's state of mind, and they motivate, if not actually dictate, the inappropriate way in which he handles culturally alien situations. The Arab is a hostage not only to his desert environment, but also to the indelible mental configurations this environment generates. We may illustrate this by one of the scenes depicted in *The Red Sea Sharks*. In this scene a group of Arabs are spotted sitting in a tent, which they have pitched up inside one of the state-rooms of a palace that has been temporarily given to them for shelter. Following their 'customary' practice, the Arabs are smoking their hubble-bubbles, and they have started a barbecue which is sending a column of smoke into the room.[32]

Illiteracy is an ally and source of ignorance. The ignorance of the Arabs must therefore be partly ascribed to the state of illiteracy which is rife amongst them. Thus, when an enemy aircraft drops leaflets over the

camp of Bab El-Ehr, he bursts out laughing and scornfully ignores their attempt: 'Poor fools, they are dropping leaflets ... and none of my men can read! He ha ha!'[33]

The Arabs are also depicted as a harsh and cruel people. In *Land of Black Gold*, Tintin is taken prisoner by a group of Arabs who tie his hands and lead him on foot across the desert. Tintin cannot last all the way to their camp, and he collapses of exhaustion. Instead of assisting and rescuing him, the Arabs untie his hands and abandon him to his fate. Snowy is appalled by this inhuman treatment of his master and makes no secret of what he thinks of the Arabs: 'Murderers! Rotten sand-hoppers!'[34] The cruelty of the Arabs is also displayed to full effect in the flogging film-scene in *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, a scene in which the hired victim is a European woman.[35] In *Land of Black Gold*[36] Muhammad Bèn Khalish Ezab Promises to have the innocent Thompson and Thomson flogged, declaring that this punishment is 'richly deserved.' This tendency to regard physical punishment as the appropriate response to transgression, whether imagined or real, is regarded as cultural legacy which is passed from father to son. Thus, when Tintin comes to free young, mischievous Prince Abdullah from his captivity, the latter threatens to tell his father to punish Tintin: 'I shall tell my pappa! ... And my pappa is the Emir! ... And my pappa will have you flogged .... And then he'll have you impaled .... And then he'll cut off your head ... and play skittles with it ... so there!' The threat issued by Prince Abdullah to Tintin is but an echo of his father's threat to Bab El-Ehr: 'Bab El-Ehr! Bab El-Ehr! Son of a mangy dog! ... Grandson of a scurvy jackal! .... Great grandson of a moulting vulture! .... My revenge will be terrible .... I will impale you on a spit! I will roast you over a slow fire! I'll pull out your beard one hair at a time ... and I will stuff it down your throat.'[37]

Spoilt Prince Abdullah is the only Arab child to be seen in the *Adventures*. Although it is not clear whether or not he is meant to represent Arab children in general, there seems to be little doubt that he is intended to be seen as a representative of his class, i.e. the spoilt, mischievous and care-free heir-apparent. He is accustomed to seeing all his desires gratified by his father who dotes on him. To his doting father, 'horrid' Prince Abdullah is a 'treasure,' a 'sugar plum' and a 'baby lambkin'[38]; he is a

little 'honey bun,' 'peppermint cream,' 'angel,' and 'chickadee'[39]; he is also a 'duckling' 'cherub,' 'chocolate candy' and 'strawberry angel cake.'[40] Instead of training his son in state-craft, Prince Khalish Ezab sets him the worst examples to follow, such as the subjugation of state policy and interests to the satisfaction of personal whims. Thus, when Arab air pilots refuse to give in to the personal wish of Prince Abdullah to "loop the loop'[41] his father, Prince Khalish Ezab, flies into a fit of rage and threatens to terminate the agreement which gives Arabair the right to establish an air-base at Wadeabdah.

The Arabs are also portrayed as a cowardly and dishonourable people. They run away in battle. Their world is a world of political intrigue and their land is a land of strife. Worse still, they are depicted as a humourless people who are instinctively prone to violence at the slightest innocent provocation. More often than not, their violent reaction is out of all proportion to whatever provocation they are subjected to, whether the provocation is conscious or not.

As though this was not enough to malign the Arabs and their character, Herge depicts them as slave-traders who, in conducting their morally reprehensible business, have no qualms about collaborating with the worst kind of European gangsters. Like sharks, these gangsters infest the waters of the Red Sea, supplying the insatiably hungry Arab market with African slaves. One of the most repulsive scenes in *The Red Sea Sharks* depicts an Arab on board a slave-carrying ship, checking the quality of its slave-cargo. He is seen examining a 'specimen' who meets with his approval: 'Hmm ... Yes ... strong muscles ... You'll do ... And teeth?... Come on, open your mouth, Sambo... Hmm, not too bad... Teeth quite sound ....' The Arab refers to the slave-cargo as 'coke,' thus revealing his racist character. Being motivated by sheer greed, he is totally oblivious to the suffering of others. For him, profit comes before godliness. Witness the fact that the unsuspecting slaves are all African Muslims on their way to Makkah to perform the pilgrimage. Tintin and the captain, representing the Christian 'white man,' rescue these African Muslims from their worst fate at the hands of their greedy and ungodly Arab co-religionists.

Ignorant, illiterate, backward, gullible, cruel, violent, humourless, rude, cowardly, dishonourable, racist, greedy, ungodly, unscrupulous and morally depraved: such is the stereotype image of the Arab as depicted by Herge in *The Adventures of Tintin*. The *Adventures* convey this image directly and effectively by means of an indivisible union of word and picture. The comic element in these *Adventures* helps smuggle this image into the young reader's unsuspecting mind. This image remains long after the laughter has died away.

Conclusion

Herge portrays the Arabs as a morally bankrupt people who inhabit a treacherous and inhospitable land. This portrayal is typical of the image of the Arabs in the West in the first half of this century. Many studies, carried out on the image of the Arabs in the West in more recent times, such as by Said El-Asmar & Ghareeb reveal that the image of the Arabs has not radically altered since the 1950s.

This conclusion is also borne out by the preliminary findings of recent pilot study which the present writer has conducted amongst a sample of first and second year students in his own university. It is true that the Arab is no longer seen as a slave-trader. It is also true that his poverty has disappeared, to be replaced by the image of the Arab as a rich *man* who squanders his wealth foolishly. For the rest, however, the old stereotype image remains more or less intact.

The permanence of this image indicates just how deeply ingrained the prejudice against the Arabs is in the West. To think that the repulsive image of the Arabs Herge presents in his *Adventures* has not radically altered in a positive direction over the past thirty or so years, despite the extensive channels of communication which nowadays exist between the West and the Arab World, is a depressing indictment of all those individuals, organisations, and institutions, which are in a position to help bring about such a change, but are reluctant, for whatever reasons, to do so.

NOTES

(1) Z.Shavit, *Poetics of Children's Literature* (University of Georgia Press, Georgia, 1986), p.3.

(2) *Ibid.*, p.35.

(3) F. El- Asmar, *Through the Hebrew Looking Glass* (Zed Press, London, 1986); *idem*, 'The Portrayal of the Arabs in Hebrew Children's Literature,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol.16, pp.81-94.

(4) E. Ghareeb (ed.), *Split Vision: The Portrayal of Arabs in the American Media* (American- Arab Affairs Council, Washington DC, 1983).

(5) J.J.Terry, *Mistaken Identity: Arab Stereotypes in Popular Writing* (American-Arab Affairs Council, Washington DC, 1985); J. Salt, 'Fact and Fiction in the Middle Eastern Novels of Leon Uris,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol.xiv,no. 3,1985; K.Christison, 'The Arab in Recent Popular Fiction,' *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 41, no.3, pp. 397 - 411.

(6) E.W.Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth, Penguin,1985).

(7) Herge, *The Crab with Golden Claws* (Magnet Books,1985), p.30.

(8) *Ibid.*, p.27.

(9) *Ibid.*, p.28.

(10) *Ibid.*, p.28.

(11) *Ibid.*, p.23.

(12) Herge, *Land of the Black Gold* (Magnet Books), p.24.

(13) *Ibid.*, p.29.

(14) *Ibid.*, p.30.

(15) *Ibid.*, p.41.

(16) *The Crab with the Golden Claws*, p.38.

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 56.

(18) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 51.

(21) Herge, *Cigars of the Pharaoh* (Magnet Books, 1985), p.51.

(22) Herge, *The Red Sea Sharks*(Magnet Books, 1985), p.30.

(23) Herge, *Land of the Black Gold* (Magnet Books, 1985), p. 30.

(24) *Ibid.*

(25) *Ibid.*, p. 61.

(26) *Ibid.*

(27) *Ibid.*

(28) *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, p.14.

(29) *Ibid.*

(30) *Ibid.*

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 14.

(32) *The Red Sea Sharks*, p. 6.

(33) *Land of the Black Gold*, p. 18.

(34) *Ibid.*, p.21.

(35) *Cigar of the Pharaoh*, p. 16.

(36) *Land of the Black Sea*, p.35.

(37) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

(39) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

(40) *Ibid.*, p. 61.

(41) *The Red Sea Sharks*, p. 30.

ARABIC BRIDGE BETWEEN ORIENT AND OCCIDENT

ABDUL HAQ

Introduction

'Arabic was the language of the Court and the Church, of Law and Commerce, of Diplomacy, and Literature and Science,' said the English Orientalist Nicholson.

'In the Middle Ages it (Arabic) was the language of learning and culture, and progressive thought throughout the civilized world,' noted the American Professor Hitti.

'Arabic was in well-developed state, with a large vocabulary and an elaborate system of grammar,' observed the Indian Arabicist Fāriq.

And I quote:

'*Al-Ḥikmatu ḍāllatu al-Mu'mın, Khudhūhā ḥaythumā wajadtumūhā*' [Wisdom is the lost (pearl) of the believer; take it wherever you find it. '*Uṭlubu al-'ılm wa law kāna bı'l-Ṣīn*' [Seek knowledge, even if it is found in China].

These and many other similar Arabic-Islamic directives prompted the Arabs and the Muslims to learn philosophies, sciences and literatures, not only from Arabic and Islamic sources, the Qur'ān and the Traditions, but also from various other sources, such as Greek, Syriac, Persian and Sanskrit, which were available with in the empire established by the Arabs and the Muslims (consisting of Christian Syria, where Roman and Greek civilizations reigned supreme; al-Iraq, an ancient cradle of several civilizations; Persia, the most leading state of the old world; and Egypt, where Coptic, Roman, Greek and Indian culture, arts, and philosophies throve).

The Arabs and the Muslims learnt all these, not just by attending the tr ıtional institutions, but also by carrying on an extensive intellectual

intercourse with other peoples. Matrimonial relations between Arabs and non-Arabs and wideranging travels, especially during the Abbasid period, facilitated the spread of knowledge. The result was the production of an Arabic literature, Islamic culture, and human science which was staggering in volume, varied in theme, and rich in content.

Arabic, which was the medium of learning of the Arabs and the Muslims, was in a well-developed state, with a large vocabulary and an elaborate system of grammar. It was enriched by other sister languages of the Semitic group, especially Hebrew, Ethiopic, Sanskrit, and Greek. The Quraysh enriched the language by carefully observing the Arabic of the many thousand Arabs that visited Makkah every year from all parts of Arabia on pilgrimage and adopting whatever was best in the usages they noticed. Being traders they travelled in most of the then civilized parts of the world and had contacts with men of different social and religious levels. These had a chastening influence on their mind and language and broadened the Arabic outlook and the Arabic language.

Arabic, with its vast vocabulary, its wealth of synonymous words, and its enormous capacity to mould each noun and verb into dozens of new forms, made a tremendous contribution to the absorption and incorporation of words and ideas from distant cultures and climes.

Translation of Oriental and Occidental Works into Arabic

Translation is as old as written literature is. The transcripts of Sumerian Gilgamesh (Epics), found in four or five Asiatic languages, are of 2nd millenium (B.C.). But the most important step, in human history, towards translation was taken by Arabic-speaking peoples.

Translation into Arabic was started in the Umayyad period by Ibn Athal, the Collector of the city of Hims in central Syria, who translated for the first Umayyad Caliph, Mu'āwiyah (661-80 C.E.), Syriac book into Arabic. After him Khālid ibn Yazīd, the grandson of Mu'āwiyah, a good scholar eager to master medicine and chemistry, translated a number of Greek and Syriac books. Translation during the Umayyad period was

very little because literary writing at that time was not developed. The most important period of translation into Arabic began with the second Abbasid Caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr (754-70 C.E.). It is said that during this period, numerous rare manuscripts on a variety of subjects in such different languages as Greek, Syriac, Persian, Roman, Latin, and Sanskrit were collected and translated into Arabic. The Sanskrit book *Siddhānta* (Ar. *Sindhind*) was translated at this time. The best-known among the translators of the time of al-Manṣūr were Ibn al-Baṭrīq, Ibn al-Muqaffa' Nawbakht, Jurjīs and al-Fazārī.

The Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (786-809 C.E.), who arranged for translation of works in a systematic form, established an academy called Dār al-Ḥikmah and appointed a good number of eminent translators from different languages and religions. He added to the already rich collection of manuscripts in his possession by drawing on centres of learning flourishing within his empire and outside. Among the most famous translators of the time of al-Rashīd were Faḍl ibn Nawbakht and Yūḥannā bin Māsawayh.

The Caliph Ma'mūn al-Rashīd (813-33 C.E.) expanded and widened the activity of collecting manuscripts and of having them translated. It is said that a team sent to the Byzantine Empire brought with it five camel-loads of Greek manuscripts from a secret place in Greece. The most eminent translators of the time of the Abbasids were Ḥunayn, al-Kindī, Sahal, al-Ḥajjāj, Thābit bin Qurrah, Ibrāhīm, Abu 'l-Faraj, al-Battānī, Qusṭā, Yaḥyā bin 'Adī and Ibn Zur'ah.

Translation work, though it might have declined from time to time, went on throughout the Abbasid period (754- 1285 C.E.), not only in Baghdad, but also in the capitals of the several provinces of the United Abbasid Empire during its first period, and in the capitals of the independent states of the broken empire during its second period.

This extensive production of Arabic translations of works on literary, philosophical, and scientific subjects enabled the Arabic-speaking world to possess Arabic translations of the works of Aristotle, the neo-Platonic commentators, the works of Plato, Galen, Hippocrates,

Archimedes, and Apollonius, as well as the famous works of Persia and India.

The tenth century was the golden period of Arabic translation not only by the Syriac-speaking Christians, but also by people who learnt Syriac, Greek, and Sanskrit.

The role played by the Arabs and the Muslims in translating literary, philosophical, and scientific works from different sources as well as in writing original works of all sorts of knowledge is beyond doubt great and contributed to the preservation of the common human heritage of knowledge. It is through Arabic that the ancient human heritage of knowledge of all kinds was accumulated.

The academic activities of the Arabs and the Muslims by travels is well described by Nicholson He says:

> In quest of knowledge men travelled over three Continents and returned home, like bees laden with honey, to impart the Precious Stores which they accumulated to crowds eager disciples, and to compile with incredible industry those works of encyclopaedic range and erudition, from which modern science, in the widest sense of the word, has derived far more than what is generally supposed

Translation of Arabic Works into European Languages

During the Middle Ages Arabic was the leading international language, like English at the present time. It was 'the language of the court and the Church, of Law and Commerce, of Diplomacy and Literature and Science.' A very huge number of original books, based on the Qur'ān and the *Hadīth*, as well as on the translated works of Greek, Persian and Indian philosophers, scientists and literarymen, were written in Arabic. These books covered a wide range of subjects, including linguistics, literature, geography, history, philosophy, science, and medicine In the course of the Middle Ages a large number of these books were

transferred to Spain, where European Scholars studied them. The various treatises of Arab scholars, which were translated into Latin, exercised a considerable influence in producing Western schools of thought in different sciences. Before long, original works in chemistry were produced in Western Europe. A considerable number of Jabir's treatises were published under the name of Geber. The Spanish Arab philosophers, Ibn Bājah (Avempase), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Ṭufayl, and Mūsā Ibn Maimūn, made their influence felt beyond the borders of Spain. They belong, in a sense, to Europe. When the West felt the need for deeper knowledge and decided to renew its links with the old thought, it first turned, not to Greek sources, but to Arabic sources.

With reference to Von Kremer, Diereks, Sedllot, Schacht and Munk, Nicholson says: 'In some departments the Arabs had made valuable additions to existing knowledge, and in comparison with the debt which the West owes to the Arabs as pioneers of learning and bringers of light to medieval Europe, the Western materials in Arabic were meagre. But the chief materials and the intellectual benefits which European civilization has derived from Arabic are immense.'

The geographical dimensions of Arabic scientific and literary movement are vast. They extend from the confines of China to the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Looking at its complete record one may say that it reflected the light of the Hellenic sun, when its day had fled, and that it shone like the moon illuminating the darkest night of medieval Europe. The Arabs and the Muslims wrote many books in Arabic on geography and history to document their widespread conquests, and they translated not a few Greek authors.

It was the Arabs and the Muslims who discovered Greek and other manuscripts on subjects such as science, philosophy, and literature and translated and preserved them in Arabic. They were then transferred to the West and other parts of the world and translated into the European languages. If Arabic had not thus played its role in the translation and preservation of the old human heritage, it would have been lost forever. It is recognized by Western scholars that the European Renaissance of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries employed a considerable

number of Arabic books in their Latin, German, Dutch, French, and English translations. Christian philosophy would not be what it is if the West had ignored the translations and the researches made in Arabic by al-Kindī, Ibn Sīnā, al-Fārābī, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Ṭufayl, al-Ghazzālī, and others.

Influence of Arabic Literature on European Literature

Dante, whose influence on European literature was deep and enormous, was acquainted with Islamic culture through the European translations of Arabic books, especially on the *al-Mi'rāj*, the midnight journey to heaven made by the Prophet Muḥammad. The first translation of the book *al-Mi'rāj* was done, by order of the Spanish King Alfonso X in 1263, two years before the birth of Dante. Dante's acquaintance with the Islamic imagination about the abode in the hereafter is obvious from the fact that he wrote the first volume of his work in 1307, when Latin and French translations of the event of *al-Mi'rāj* were well known among the educated communities. No doubt he must have availed himself of the chance to read about it in a translated form because Italy, in general, and Florence, his birthplace in particular, were centres of learning. What more is the similarity between the event of *al-Mi'rāj* and the *Divine Comedy*. *The Divine Comedy* of Dante is very similar to *Risālat al-Ghufrān* [Letter of Forgiveness] of al-Ma'arrī, the philosopher poet of Arabic, which was written in the first part of the eleventh century and was the most mature international representative of Islamic culture in Arabic.

Many ideas of the celebrated Muslim Ṣufi and Arab poet of Andalus, Ibn 'Arabī, are available in the *Divine Comedy* of Dante.

The theories of Islamic philosophy, based on Greek wisdom and developed in Arabic, constituted an intellectual minaret as it were, in the darkness of the Middle Ages. They constituted a bridge between Greek philosophy and European philosophy (produced by philosophers like Descartes and Pascla and others).

The philosophy of Aristotle was studied by the West through the

eyes of Ibn Rushd and other Arab philosophers, who exercised much influence on the famous universities of the West for a long time.

Arabic stories exercised a strong influence on the novel and story-writing in the West. Story books like *al-Tahdhīb al-Dīnī*, *Thousand and One Nights*, *Sindbād*, *Alī Bābā*, *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*, etc. exercised enormous influence on European writers of fiction like Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Boccaccio. The first book was first translated into Latin in 1106, then it was translated into other European languages. The second book was well known in Spain even in the beginning of the thirteenth century and was translated into French in 1704 and again in 1782. It was later translated into English and other languages and was published more than 400 times. A number of European writers were greatly influenced by it, Voltaire being one of them. The fifth book, which is an Arabic version of the Sanskrit book *Panchatantra*, became widely known to the world only because of the efforts of the Arabic translator, 'Abd-Allāh Ibn al-Muqaffa'.

These stories, especially the *al-Tahdhīb al-Dīnī*, *Thousand and One Nights*, *Sindbād*, etc. provided the necessary inspiration for the writing of the famous European novels like *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. European writers adapted the framework and the content of these stories for their writings.

Arabic As a Bridge Between Orient and Occident in Present Time

Arabic resumed its role as a bridge between the Orient and the Occident, as well as between the ancient and the modern at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Arabic translations since the beginning of the nineteenth century from the European languages, especially English, French, German, and Russian, cover a wide range. They include military, engineering, medical,literary, legal, and historical materials.

The well-known translators of the nineteenth century in Egypt are Rifā'ah al-Ṭahṭāwī, 'Uthmān Jalāl, and M.A. Abdul Razzāq. They translated the works of Moliere, Racine, Dumas, Fenelon, Voltaire, Gide,

Hugo, Shakespeare, Shaw, Tolstoy and many others.

Among the famous translators of the Lebanon are Sulayman al-Bustani and Najeeb Haddad (who translated the novels of Corneille, Hugo, and others). Some of the most important literary works of the West and the East translated into Arabic at the present time are:

1. *The Mahabharata*,
2. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* of Gandhi,
3. *Discovery of India* of Nehru,
4. A number of the works of Tagore,
5. *Rubā'iyāt* of Omar Khayyam,
6. *The Iliad* of Homer,
7. *The Divine Comedy* of Dante,
8. The masterpieces of Goethe, Tolstoy, and others.

Arabic, in return, has contributed to Western and Eastern languages, a good number of literary works, for example, Khalil Jibran's English books, especially *The Prophet, The Forerunner, The Mud, and Sand and Foam*, as well as his Arabic books, for example, the *Broken Wings* and the *Rebellious Spirits* are widely circulated and read. The plays of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm are, wholly or partly, translated in the European languages, and have received wide notice through theatre and television. Ṭāhā Ḥussain's *al-Adab al-Jāhilī*, *al-Ayyām* and *al-Mu'adhdhabūn fi'l-Arḍ*, Muhammad Taimoor's *Atlal*, Malup's *Ala Basat al-Rīb*, Jurji Zaidan's *Ta'rīkh al-Tamaddun al-Islāmī* and some of his historical novels, and many other Arabic books are available in many Western and Eastern languages.

It is true that the contribution of Arabic to world literature at the present time is, in comparison with what it was in the Middle Ages, little. But who knows what role Arabic may play in the near or distant future as a bridge between the thoughts of the Orient and the Occident? The future world order in the literary, philosophical, social, cultural, and economic spheres will determine the trend of Arabic literature: 'Arabic is undergoing a renaissance, and there is every likelihood of its again becoming a great literary vehicle.'

Some Points on Problems of Translation

First I would like to mention the lack of equivalent words. Many linguists have noticed this from time to time. I have no doubt that Arabic, being long experienced in translation and having an abundance of synonyms, a vast vocabulary, and an enormous capacity to mould each noun and verb into many new forms, does not face this sort of problem. A translator can even Arabicize foreign words, as translators during the Abbasid period did. I may mention here a few examples:

Magnet	(*Maghnāṭīs*)	Telegraph	(*Tilighrāf*)	Jubilee	(*Yūbīl*)
Oxygen	(*Uksījīn*)	Hydrogen	(*Haydrūjīn*)	Geology	(*Jiyūlūjiyā*)
Sodium	(*Sūdiyūm*)	Bacteria	(*Bactīriyā*)	Vitamin	(*Fītāmīn*)
Balloon	(*Ballūn*)	Cinema	(*Sinimā*)	Film	(*Fīlm*)

Arabic has, also, the art of accomplishing much with little means — in other words, with the simplest of mechanisms. A glance at the Arabic lexicon would be enough to understand that there can be no mechanism simpler than a triliteral, which is the general rule of Arabic. For example, *lamaza*, to wipe one's lips with the tongue; *Rataja*, to begin to walk by a child; *Namara* to mark with number etc. Most Arabic words are triliterals.

While an Arabic triliteral calls for a long sentence in the process of translation into other languages, the shortest possible Arabic word conveys the widest possible meaning. Bernard Shaw once condemned and deplored English, the international language, as wear and tear of machinery, and loss of time and space, he was compelled to resort to short hand on account of an uneconomical and wasteful English spelling. The triliteral Arabic words are perfectly free from such defects.

The importance of translations in the modern age, when distances have disappeared because of the scientific means of communication, is well known. Even then some people, though they go by the name of academics, are not fair to the work of literary translation. They have reasons of their own for adopting this kind of attitude.

An inspired translator is capable of making a literary translation a new, artistic one by his skill. Translations of the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Goethe, Voltaire, Tolstoy, Dostoievsky, Homer, Tagore, Khayyam, Iqbal, and so many other great writers are as excellent as the original. Some of these writers have been tanslated both in verse and in poetic prose. I may mention here the translations of the *Iliad* of Homer, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, and *Paradise Lost* of Milton into Arabic verse and poetic prose.

If an academic translator captures the inner concepts of a literary text and elucidates these with his own style of writing and gives to the words their natural volume of meaning with artistic skill, his translation, certainly, can be creative, effective, interesting, and productive. Are not the translated works just mentioned above masterpieces, as famous and unforgettable as the originals?

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A WESTERN SCHOLAR'S APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS– SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS*

(Review Article)

S. VAHIDUDDIN

PROF. MONTGOMERY WATT is a renowned scholar on Islam and his books on the life of the Prophet have been marked by moderation and understanding. Compared to what has been written earlier on the Prophet and the image that has been projected through not only biased missionaries but even by scholars without any commitment, his books show a marked improvement. Now realizing that the relations between the two great religions have been soured by myths and misconceptions which persist even today, he tries to make amends by taking a more sober and objective view and to clear misperceptions of the past, thus ushering a new era of understanding and reconciliation. But in spite of the best intentions to bring about a rapprochement between Islam and Christianity, his approach is unfortunately marred by unwarranted assumptions which can hardly contribute to serve the cause which he has in view. Prof. Watt, who is insistent on historical factuality, does not hesitate to flout historical evidence if it serves his purpose. He believes that the story of the burning of the library of Alexandria even if historically rejected reflects eloquently the Muslim psyche. He points out that the source is Muslim, though regrettably it has not stood unbiased probe and historical criticism. With our orientalists the source, if it is Muslim, becomes respectable in one context and suspect in another (p. 41). The learned writer has not freed himself from the polemical slant, and taken as a whole his book may even be considered as a critique of Islam. What vitiates the orientalist's appreciation of the Muslim scripture is that he fails to understand that it is not a book in the ordinary understanding and cannot be judged by the criteria which we are wont to apply to a piece of academic research. Its

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*William Montgomery Watt, *Muslim-Christian Encounters*, Routledge, London and NewYork, 1991, 164 pp.

narrrative is not meant to serve any historical purpose but is intended as a moral exhortation for lessons to be derived therefrom. Its prophets have an identity of their own and their mode of behaviour and their actions cannot be expected to be confirmed by historical evidence. This is also true to some extent of Biblical narratives. The story of Adam and his fall, the story of Noah and his Arc, the sufferings of Jonah and Moses crossing the river with his hosts are meta-historical in effect. How can we understand the belief in the Resurrection of Christ or his Transfiguration as based on historical evidence? They stand, as they are, as challenges to faith and not as questions of history. How surprising that our learned Professor finds fault with the Qur'ānic narration of the life of Moses and bewails the fact that 'events are treated in isolation and not put into chronological order.' It is clear that the learned Professor's preoccupation with academic pursuits and formal research has made him insensitive to the religious ethos (p. 12). He can accept only what is 'established by some historical method,' and not otherwise. The Qur'ānic use of the term *Ummī* is, according to him, convincingly shown to mean 'gentile' or 'non-Jewish' and not what is traditionally taken to mean. This is to completely ignore the relevance of tradition in the formation of religious consciousness. The students of Islam know what role the designtion of *Ummī* as unlettered has played in Muslim devotion and Sufi perceptions. It is not concerned so much with the fact whether the Prophet was able to read or write but with the belief that his knowledge was not derived from literary sources but had a transcendental basis (p. 135).

Professor Watt's treatment of the so-called Satanic verses is typical of the whole range of literature which has grown in this context. It is a fact, confirmed by the Qur'ān that Satanic whisperings may be tried to intrude into relevations and no relevation can claim any exception.' But from this to conclude that the Prophet himself believed in the intercession of deities in his earlier states is an unwarranted insinuation. The study of other than normal experience further shows that there are cases in which one feels compelled to give expression to blasphemies one is most afraid of. It is possible that on the highest level of experience unconscious fears may become active disruptively, though for a time only. In any case the Satanic verses need not haunt the Western scholar so much as to affect seriously his understanding of the revelation. Much satisfaction is derived

from the fact that the evidence is based on Muslim sources. It is to be pointed out that while the Muslims were very careful in lifting the evidence about the authenticity of Prophetic traditions, they did not give much heed to the historical narratives and much of hearsay has found a place in them.

Another serious matter is what the learned Professor considers the pre-requisites for a reconciliation between the Muslims and Christians. Muslims are asked to concede that the Qur'ān is not free from mistakes and errors. Only then can they hope Christians to consider Muḥammad as a Prophet in a sense (p.148.). Further, to show perhaps how far Christians have gone in their appreciation of the Qur'ān, Prof. Watt calls to witness Arthur J. Arberry's glowing tribute to the Qur'ān. Arberry freely admits that in times of personal distress he felt the power of the Unseen hand, whatever it might be, 'which sustained and comforted the writer.' He was therefore impelled 'to acknowledge his gratitude to whatever power inspired the man and the Prophet who first recited these scriptures' (p.148). Muslims should ungrudgingly appreciate the kind of feelings which are best calculated to bring close the followers of one faith to another. But unfortunately, though not surprisingly, we find a different tone in the distinguished German Islamist Rudi Parat's review of Arberry's translation which he considered as a work 'which is bound to get enthusiastic reception among his Muslim friends.' For him 'this (the mystic version) reveals only a possibility and does not exclude other possibilities of interpretation.' Ironically enough, Arberry's derisive remarks about the Higher Critic aptly applies to Prof. Watt himself. Needless to say, the Prophet and the Qur'ān stand on their own and do not need any recognition or appreciation from critics and scholars. It has often been said that academic scholarship, however vast it be, is apt to veil rather than reveal the mysteries which any, not only the Qur'anic, scripture may hold. (*Der Koran*, Darm-Stadt, 1973, p.27)

Professor Watt makes much of 'the objective historical facts' and the unwillingness of Muslims to accept the conclusions. We wonder how much of history so-called can shape the faith of any community. This is nowhere more in evidence than in the history of Christianity. It is vain to complain of the inadequacies of the Qur'ānic perceptions and to expect it to comply with the demand which can be made on a piece of research.

Prof. Watt puts forth certain demands on Muslims without which any understanding between the two great religions cannot come about and the dialogue cannot lead to fruitful conclusions. The whole concept of demands smacks of imposition which can create an impasse.

The faith other than one's own should be taken as it is and considered as born of an autonomous experience and not reducible to any other. Crucifixion for example is central to Christianity and there is no point for a Muslim to question it, as there is no need for a Muslim to accept the Biblical version on its face value. Even Christianity was not satisfied with the death of Christ as an end but had to resort to Resurrection. Is Resurrection a fact of history or a matter of faith? Strangely enough, no less a committed Christian than Schweitzer came to extremely negative conclusions in his quest of historical Christ. Is Christ to be sought in the interior of faith or in history?

When we come to judge Islam's approach to history we find that it is not concerned with history as history but with history as a pointer to lessons which can be derived from it. In recent times, a Finnish scholar Heikki Raisanen has adequately shown that the well-articulated picture of Jesus that the Qur'ān presents is not at all inconsistent with the New Testament narrative as is generally supposed. He observes that the study of Luke should help us to perceive that the Qur'ānic portrait of Jesus is not so remote from the N.T. as might appear to be at first glance and ' that it is impossible to compare the Qur'ānic Jesus with the Christianity of New Testament, [as] such a unified Christology does not exist.' (p.127). Professor Raisanen's comments naturally provoked great controversy and it was outright rejected by many Christians. Whatever the Christians may think, it will be extremely naive on the part of Muslims to expect an outsider to share in their faith while committed to his own. It is enough if he considers the Prophetic experience as authentic leaving aside the question of its source. The Biblical scholar's approach leads to a fairer appreciation of the Qur'ānic perceptions than that of the Islamist ("The Portrait of Jesus in the Qurān," *The Muslim World*, April, 1980).

The dialogue is possible only when we are alert to the sentiments and perceptions of the followers of other faith and do not make our faith

the ultimate criterion.

Muslims have begun to admit that Islam is a process, its potential is not exhausted in history and *Ijtihād* as the principle of movement, as Iqbal called it, should again come into force. The shifting situations of life and new challenges demand rethinking and reappraisal. Anyhow a discussion of the sort as that undertaken by Prof. Watt is to be appreciated and Muslims have to take into account the suggestions and conclusions of a scholar who is also a committed Christian. His work has to be approached and appreciated by its intention rather than by what it has really achieved.

BOOK REVIEW

DAVID S. POWERS

STUDIES IN QUR'ĀN AND ḤADĪTH: THE FORMATION OF THE ISLAMIC LAW OF INHERITANCE

University of California Press,
Berkeley, California, USA, 1986; xiii + 263 pp.; $35.00

ISLAM is, in addition to being a religion, a complete way of life. Through its law of succession, guidelines are provided on how man can disburse his wealth when alive as well as how he (or his relatives) can distribute his estate (to worthiers) at the point of death. The Qur'ān treats the law of inheritance in Chapters Two, Four and Five while *Ḥadīth* books are replete with interpretations of divine injunctions on the subject. Hence, Islamic lawyers give the law of inheritance an adequate place in their books. Notable Western scholars have also written on Islamic law of succession. David S. Powers has, of recent, added his contribution.

Author of the book under review observed 'a discrepancy between the prescriptions of Islamic law... and the actual manner in which wealth and property were passed down from one generation to the next.' He thereby summed up courage to 'explain in historical terms, how the 'science of the shares' came to assume its classical form.' He ended up in the refutation of 'sperimposition theory' which his Western predecessors adopted from early Muslim writers without much questioning. He there after reconstructed the Islamic system of inheritance through the introduction of 'proto - Islamic law' which to his belief, was received by the Prophet Muḥammad (p.b.u.h.).

We want to discuss the content of the book under three headings:

(a) Refutation of 'Superimposition theory,'
(b) Introduction of proto - Islamic law of inheritance, and
(c) Interference with the pristine teaching of Islam on inheritance soon after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad (p.b.u.h.).

First, David Powers has proved that the system of inheritance was governed by the principle of seniority in the Arab clan during the pre-Islamic period. With Islam, the system changed completely with emphasis on direct descent. As such, the 'superimposition theory' (that Islamic law came to *modify* the pre-Islamic customary law of the Arabs) cannot be completely correct. Rather, Islamic law came to *replace* the tribal customary law (Emphasis is ours). Second, the author introduced proto- Islamic law of inheritance which has certain features:

1. It permists full testation (by the deceased before his demise) as it awards small fractional share to relatives who would have inherited in the absence of a valid will. It also permits the testator to

bequeath up to one-third of the estate to parents and/or other close relatives. This system implies that every Muslim must be conversant with Islamic law of inheritance so as to know how to prepare will on his estate with the approach of death and to determine what portion is due to each heir.

2. It does not permit spouse to inherit one another, right to inherit is limited to blood relations who are grouped into primary and secondary heirs. Male and femal primary heirs share the property on ratio 2:1 while male and female secondary heirs (whose portion may not exceed one-third of the property) inherit *per capita*. Children of the deceased are usually primary heirs while in their absence, parents and siblings step into their shoes. Let us consider the following examples:-

(i) Father 1/6; Mother 1/6 (totalling 1/3 for secondary heirs); plus children 2/3 (each male sharing double the portions of each female as primary heirs).

(ii) Brother 1/6; Sister 1/6 (totalling 1/3 for secondary heirs); plus Father and Mother 2/3 on ration 2:1 as primary heirs. If husband or wife joins the heirs in either case, he or she shall not receive the divine fractional share but a bequest. Thus, the problem of *al-'awl* in Islamic law of inheritance is solved; just as sharing on ratio 2:1 by male and female is established for father and mother when they are primary heirs. However, when parents inherit as secondary heirs, they share *per capita* as in illustration (i) above.

Third, the book under review attempts to prove through historical perspectives that bequest verses are not abrogated. It corroborated its stand with the divine mention of 'after bequest or debt' in the Qur'ān—especially in verses 11 and 12 of Chapter Four which award fractional shares to heirs. It also suggests names of some *Ṣaḥābàh* who possibly played some effective roles in interpreting the Qur'ānic and Prophetic teachings on *Kalālah* to suit their political leaning or event of their time.

We want to assert that the book is an indispensable material for experts in Islamic law to possess. Motivation for its writing reveals the slow rate at which culture changes. Qur'ānic teaching on the shares was being gradually implemented during the first century of Islam. Furthermore, we cherish the approach of the author who honestly revealed the various views of different writers and commentators on the subject even when such views run counter to his hypotheses in the book. The work is well researched and proves that Islam is not a religion for the ignorant people. Every Muslim must acquire education. By this, a propositus ought to be able to distribute his estate before death by drawing a testament which will spell out what is due to each heir as well as award bequest to close or distant relatives.

Superimposition theory has its merit; yet, its adoption will be tantamount to making Islam the religion of the Arabs only. We, therefore, support the author partially in his refutation of earlier works on it. Proto-Islamic law has its merits too, yet it violates the Qur'ānic injunction on the shares to spouse by making husband and wife inheriting one another only by bequest (except where the will is invalid). Not only that, allocation of one-half of the estate to Mother when she is the only primary heir (because a female is entitled to one-half of a male's share) is not in strict conformity with Qur'ānic teachings on her share. Finally, the reconstruction of *yūrathu/Imra'atun/yūsā* in Qur'ān, IV:12

to *yūrathu/Imra'atun/yūṣī* complex which guided the author to define *Kalālah* as 'daughter-in-law' or 'sister-in-law' does not solve the totality of problems associated with *Kalālah* in Islamic law of inheritance. The idea of disinheriting spouse (and making him or her inherit by bequest) solves part of the problems but this hypothesis equally violates Allāh's directives on the allotted share to him or her. Indeed, David S Powers has dealt with many intricate issues relating to Islamic law of inheritance in the book. Someone may be inclined to write a comprehensive appraisal of the book in the near future.

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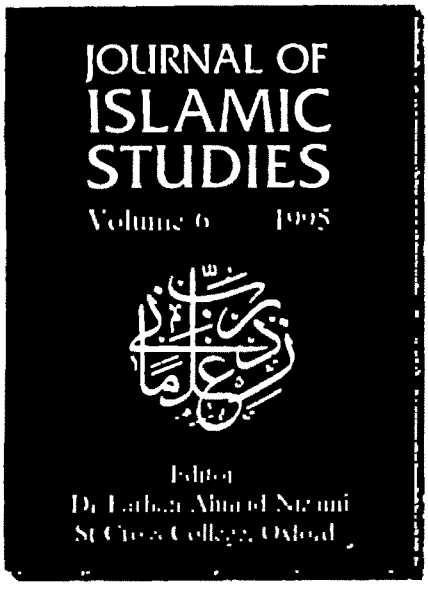

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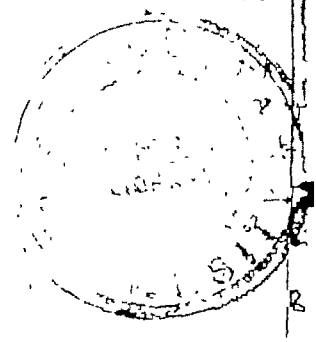

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